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FEAR, HONOR, INTERVENTION: WHY DID THE US NOT STOP KNOWN  
GENOCIDE?

BY  
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## APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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## DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.



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Major Patrick T. Dierig earned his commission in 2001 through the US Air Force Officer Training School. A senior navigator and electronic warfare officer with more than 2,500 hours in the AC-130U and MC-130H, Major Dierig has flown combat missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and led joint planning cells for special operations missions in South America and Africa. Additionally, Major Dierig has served as an executive officer, a group chief of safety, and a liaison officer to a special operations task force in Iraq and US Special Operations Command-Europe. Major Dierig holds a bachelor's degree from Xavier University, and master's degrees from both the University of Oklahoma and the US Naval War College. Upon graduation from the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, he was assigned to serve as a Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



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## ABSTRACT

The US National Security Strategy promotes the idea that the US will defend universal human rights, while the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide creates the international framework legitimizing and directing nations of the world to intervene militarily to protect human rights and end or prevent genocide. Yet continually the US fails to use military intervention to stop genocide. By understanding the historical characteristics of limitations in utilizing military intervention, this study will actually serve to help identify future challenges and better prepare the US to intervene when appropriate.

This study examines three main case studies – Rwanda, Bosnia, and Sudan. Based on the three case studies, this study looks at how various schools of International Relations (IR) theory can help explain why nations and leaders make the decisions they do; as well as analyzes factors that influence the decisions to intervene or not. Factors include the time elapsed between each conflict's start and the mass killing; natural resources that each nation contributed to the international community and how it affected the relationship with the U.S.; the ethnicity of each nation; and the political lobby and political environment of the U.S. during the period. This study also explains how past experience and the use of analogies can drive political decisions.

Although each case is unique, there are common characteristics visible in all three cases. This study has identified three primary characteristics that may explain why the US does not utilize military intervention to stop genocide.

The first characteristic preventing the US from utilizing military intervention to stop genocide is the nature of international relations. More specifically, the prevailing school of international relations theory through which a nation and its political leaders view the world and acts is key to understanding its priorities and likely courses of action. How a nation views the world, and more specifically through which IR lens it does the viewing, is critical to understanding and possibly predicting a nation's response to genocide.

Secondly, the importance of relevant, accurate, and timely information is key, and its lack may prevent the US from utilizing military intervention. In all three cases, the pace of atrocities, the intensity of the violence, and the understanding of the nature of violence (genocide or unfortunate casualties of civil war) was complicated and difficult to articulate, much less debate, due to a lack of reliable information. With increased violence, an increase of uncertainty is reasonable to assume. Therefore dependable intelligence is critical.

Third, international governmental organizations (UN, NATO, etc.) have utility, but also limitations in stopping genocide. The UN, in particular, has the ability to authorize a legitimate intervention into a state. Such authorization can take considerable time and may not occur at all, given the number of member states and their competing views and interests.

A critical element to stopping genocide, separate from the *desire* to stop genocide, is a nation-state's *ability* to protect power rapidly and in sufficient mass to make a difference. The ability is not simply measured in force, but in political willingness.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

*To forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time.*

--Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor

*Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed....Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust.*

--Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor

When Allied forces liberated Buchenwald concentration camp in April 1945, the malnourished prisoners made hand-made signs reading, “Never Again.” As the camp shifted from a site of genocide to a historic memorial, a permanent stone marker has replaced the hand-made signs with metal stenciling reiterating the voices of thousands of prisoners – “Never Again.” Those words have echoed in other locations of genocide from Chile, to the Genocide Museum in Kigali, Rwanda, to the Argentine truth commission.<sup>1</sup>

Modern US Presidents have echoed the words – “Never Again” – as well. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter stated, “Never again will the world stand silent, never again will the world fail to act in time to prevent this this terrible crime of genocide.”<sup>2</sup> Later, in 1991, President George H.W. Bush visited Auschwitz and voiced his belief not only to honor victims, but also to act to prevent genocide.<sup>3</sup> President Bill Clinton, at the opening

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<sup>1</sup> David Rieff, “The Persistence of Genocide,” Policy Review No 16, February 2011, Retrieved on December 30, 2013 at <http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/64261>.

<sup>2</sup> “President’s Commission on the Holocaust: Remarks on Receiving the Final Report of the Commission” September 27, 1979, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Jimmy Carter*, 1979 (Washington DC: GPO, 1979), 1773.

<sup>3</sup> “Remarks of President George Bush at the Simon Wiesenthal Dinner, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, California,” Federal News Service, June 16, 1991.

of the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC noted, “We must not permit that to happen again.”<sup>4</sup> Samantha Power, US Ambassador to the United Nations, argued that the current state of inaction is not a failure, but is actually working according to a system that lacks prioritization for intervention by the US government. As long as US Presidents and the Federal government speak out against genocide, yet fail to make genocide prevention a priority, it will continue.<sup>5</sup>

## **Background**

Although Elie Wiesel, US Presidents, and countless others have committed to allow genocide *never* to occur *again* without response, it has. In reality, government leaders around the world often have decided that military intervention to stop humanitarian atrocities does not always outweigh the economic, political, or social risks associated with such intervention. A foreign nation sending forces to conduct military actions to stop genocide is much more difficult than simply spouting rhetoric and verbal condemnation against genocide. Following World War II (WWII), world leaders were united in actively reiterated the need to stop genocide, ethnic cleansing, and other humanitarian atrocities from being repeatedly committed. Whether emphasized by the United Nations, individual nations, world leaders, or simply average citizens, the same rhetoric of stopping senseless ethnic cleansing has been verbalized, yet often not acted upon effectively, in a timely manner, or at all.

Various reasons drive national leaders to self-impose limitations on intervention, regardless of moral or humanitarian concerns. Often the lack of response is a result of competing interests among nations in position to help, confusion about the conflict, or merely a lack of interest from nations whose leaders believe it is not in their best interest to intervene. While there are significant cases in which genocide has occurred due to a lack of intervention, other historical cases demonstrate that intervention can and has stopped genocide or atrocities often leading to genocide.

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<sup>4</sup> “Remarks at the Dedication of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum,” April 22, 1993, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1993* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1979).

<sup>5</sup> Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, XXI.

## History of Successful Military Intervention

Although national leaders may be hesitant to intervene militarily in a sovereign nation for a variety of reasons, there have been cases of successful intervention throughout history. These cases have spanned a wide variety of circumstances and include examples of bilateral, multilateral and coalition interventions. Unilateral interventions also have been successful in stopping genocide. Individual nation-states have stopped or minimized atrocities, as exemplified by: India's intervention in East Pakistan to thwart massacres by Pakistani troops; Tanzania's intervention in Uganda to remove the Idi Amin regime; and, Vietnam's intervention in Cambodia to stop atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise, coalitions of states have intervened to stop atrocities and demonstrate to the world their common political stand, while maximizing their collective resources to stop violence against innocent people. For example, the US, British, and French air forces combined to protect Kurdish and Shiite-Iraqi populations immediately following the Gulf War and these air operations continued for a decade. Additionally, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) 1992-1993 mission was established to end civil war and restore democratic political order and infrastructure in Cambodia. Finally, the massive UN effort to end starvation and minimize violence in Somalia in 1993 did not have an ideal outcome, but the United Nations Missions in Somalia (UNISOM I and UNISOM II) minimized warlord aggression and fed and protected starving and exploited civilians.<sup>7</sup> When intervention does successfully deter genocide, the potential reasons a nation may intervene can result as a result of strategic national interests. Yet there also may be a humanitarian or altruistic reason for intervening; intervention on behalf of moral necessity or mankind's virtues, value-sets that mandate doing *something* to help those in need.

Public reasoning and rationale for US intervention is affected by the current

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<sup>6</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 73.

<sup>7</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 78.

international political system in which the US serves as the sole global superpower. This power status is supported by a strong military, as well as governmental institutions and resources to support a large humanitarian intervention effort. The intentions of other nations notwithstanding, one could argue the US is the only nation capable of intervening on a scale large enough to stop a national humanitarian crisis. Former North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) commander, Admiral James Stavridis, noted that the military intervention in Libya in 2011-12, although extremely successful, demonstrated Europe's reliance on the US military to perform the heavy lifting militarily during intervention operations. Due to significant cuts in defense spending, the European allies now spend on average just 1.6 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense (many EU nations are below one percent), while the US spends more than four percent of its GDP on defense. The US invests three times as much in defense spending as do the remaining 27 NATO nations combined.<sup>8</sup> This military spending gap, in turn, translates into a capability and capacity gap between allies that will require the US to be a major player, if not the lead player, for future military interventions required to stop genocide by the most capable regional organization in the world.

The history of US intervention since the end of the Cold War is not simply a question of the US wanting to solve a humanitarian problem, but rather how other issues in the political environment frame the humanitarian problem. Often US decisions to intervene militarily are driven not by the conflict in question, but by the political risk associated with intervention. As Yaacov Vertzberger noted, the decision-making for intervention is not only the context of "the problem (i.e. national security, health hazard, etc.), but its structural attributes (i.e. level of complexity, degree of uncertainty and ambiguity, time horizon for gains or losses) and the personal and social attributes of the decision makers (i.e. personality, group structure)."<sup>9</sup> For instance, in 1992, US President George H.W. Bush sent US military forces to the famine-stricken nation of Somalia. When the United

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<sup>8</sup> Ivo H. Daalder and James G. Stavridis, "NATO's Victory in Libya: The Right Way to Run an Intervention," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2012), <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137073/ivo-h-daalder-and-james-g-stavridis/natos-victory-in-libya>.

<sup>9</sup> Yaacov Vertzberger, *Risk Taking and Decisionmaking: Foreign Military Intervention Decisions*, xi.

Nations was slow to respond to this humanitarian crisis, President Bush was emotionally moved to intervene. Front-page headlines and stark pictures of starving children provided the American people with a “sense of noblesse oblige and provided President Bush with a popular stage” for his humanitarian efforts.<sup>10</sup> The US initiated operations to airlift supplies to the Somali citizens and US Marines to protect and deliver them. The operation resulted in 2,475 flights that delivered 28,051 tons of food.<sup>11</sup> After warlords attacked follow-on United Nations (UN) peacekeepers, US special operations forces (SOF) were tasked with minimizing the threat of warlords. The US intervention in Somalia was cut short not because President Bush did not want to assist the Somali people, but because the political capital expended was not worth additional political risk for President Clinton after 19 US SOF members were killed during a raid on a Somali warlord. The mission made famous by the Mark Bowden book and subsequent movie, *Blackhawk Down*, was the bloodiest day of combat for US forces since the Vietnam War.<sup>12</sup> American deaths, and shocking images of dead Americans being dragged through the streets, drove the decision by the Clinton Administration to withdraw US troops from Somalia. Although 19,000 UN troops remained in the country, the US withdrawal prompted many US allies to depart as well. With the departure of Western powers, much of the quality intelligence, command and control, and firepower—“the UN’s deterrent”—was gone as well.<sup>13</sup> Somalia’s capital, Mogadishu, descended back into a situation characterized by chaos, utter starvation, and death. The effects of the October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1993 battle would reverberate in the halls of Washington D.C. for the foreseeable future and have lasting impact on US intervention.<sup>14</sup> As Jonathon Stevenson argued, the 15-hour battle in Mogadishu most likely influenced American military intervention policy for

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<sup>10</sup> Jonathan Stevenson, *Losing Mogadishu: Testing US Policy in Somalia*, xii.

<sup>11</sup> United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) History and Research Office, “Naval Special Warfare Forces in Somalia, 1992-1995”, 2. Original data presented in USCENTCOM/USSOCOM Briefing (U) Special Operations Forces in Operations: PROVIDE RELIEF and RESTORE HOPE, August 3, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Bowden, *Blackhawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (Berkeley, CA: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Jonathan Stevenson, *Losing Mogadishu: Testing US Policy in Somalia*, xiv.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Shultz Jr., “Showstoppers: Nine Reasons Why We Never Sent Our Special Operations Forces After al Qaeda Before 9/11,” *The Weekly Standard* 9, no. 19 (2004): 25-33.

decades.<sup>15</sup>

Domestic political and social forces can drive both the justification for intervention, but also the public call to withdrawal forces for an intervention. The Somalia intervention demonstrated that a nation's political priorities can steer a leader into believing that intervention is justified, while also drive a leader to withdraw troops when the mission is unexpectedly costly, regardless of whether the mission was completed or not. With such forces often driving the political decision-making, one might argue that the domestic political environment can be spring-loaded for intervention or anti-intervention from the outset. The authors of a RAND study conclude, in an article, "Do US Military Interventions Occur in Clusters?" that domestic political agendas have significant impact on the US government's decision to intervene militarily or not. The study's authors suggest that since 1949, US military intervention is more likely to occur in clusters than in evenly distributed patterns; not simply clusters, but constellations affected by geopolitical, domestic, and social conditions.<sup>16</sup> This illustrates the fact a nation may place greater value on domestic politics than the reasons for proposed intervention, however noble the intentions, – e.g. to uphold values, defend human rights, prevent atrocities, or simply abide by the 1948 Genocide Convention.

After all the rhetoric, treaties, and promises to stop it, genocide still occurs. This fact forces one to search for the characteristics that cause nations and institutions to intercede to stop genocide. Conversely, one also must find the characteristics that prevent countries from intervening in other situations. The strongest argument in support of intervention to prevent or stop genocide focuses on human rights or values. While it is easily understandable why nations intervene militarily when its strategic interests are involved, it can be more challenging for a nation-state to intervene on behalf of values, as values are difficult to define and definitions often differ between groups of individuals. Yet upholding values often are what separate good from evil. Thus, in preventing or stopping genocide, some national leaders may consider intervening on behalf of values.

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<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Stevenson, *Losing Mogadishu: Testing US Policy in Somalia*, 95.

<sup>16</sup> "Do US Military Interventions Occur in Clusters?" RAND Corporation, RB-9718-A (2013) Research Brief, Santa Monica, California, 2013.



## Intervention for Values

Over the course of time, the US has made modest progress in its response to genocide, but such advances are overshadowed by America's toleration of unspeakable atrocities, often committed in plain sight.<sup>17</sup> A common theme of US *non-intervention* often is justified for a lack of *strategic impact* to the US. Yet at some point, American values and ideals may drive the need to intervene to save lives. The United States has been a bastion of freedom and promoter of democratic values for more than two centuries. From our earliest days, American values have been trumpeted. Noam Chomsky noted that the US is credited worldwide as the leader in the defense of human rights and justice. Yet there remains a spectrum of debate over US policy defending those rights. On one side, "Wilsonian idealists" believe in the need to defend human rights and values globally. On the other side, "Realists" suggest the US is not physically capable of defending human rights everywhere, especially in countries not directly linked to American national security or self-interest.<sup>18</sup> While many US Presidential administrations have spoken out against human rights atrocities, American values have rarely driven the need for intervention since the end of the Cold War.

Although US foreign policy leaders often speak of defending human rights and values, those same values often are brushed aside or curtailed when military intervention is mentioned to assist in genocide prevention due to a "lack of strategic interest" in the embattled state. Yet one could argue US values are vital national interests that need to be defended. Over the past two decades one of the greatest tragedies of genocide is the lack of support for human rights and values, despite the capability of the US to do so, in exchange for other national or personal political interests.

The US, as the world's most powerful state, has been and for the foreseeable future, will be seen by the international community as the upholder of values such as religious and personal freedom in the world. There will be times when those values may need to be defended for the US to maintain its international leadership role. According to the

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<sup>17</sup> Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, 503.

<sup>18</sup> Noam Chomsky, *The Umbrella of US Power: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Contradictions of US Policy*, 6.

National Security Strategy (NSS), the US will indeed defend values in support of universal human rights. The 2010 NSS states the US has a responsibility to prevent genocide and mass atrocities and will, in certain instances, utilize “military means to prevent and respond to genocide and mass atrocities.”<sup>19</sup> The strategic messaging of such documents to American citizens is that US military intervention in places such as Afghanistan or Iraq is necessary. As noted by Russell Howard, the US advertises and fights “crusades” against evil, “thus Americans traditionally thought of war in absolute terms in which the enemy was demonized, the fight was to the finish, and absolute victory was the ultimate objective.”<sup>20</sup> Even various religious groups have endorsed intervention as a virtuous endeavor for Americans. The convention of American Catholic Bishops, for example, stated, “the principles of sovereignty and nonintervention may be overridden by forceful means in exceptional circumstances, notably in the cases of genocide or when whole populations are threatened by aggression or anarchy.”<sup>21</sup> The idea of fighting for a cause, or simply for humanity, is noble. Determining whose values are to be supported or defended, and under what conditions, are often the source of disagreement or institutional paralysis. This point is pertinent as not everyone holds the same values at the same time, especially when those values mean intervening militarily in a foreign land. As Francisco Wong-Diaz discussed, *values* are not universally accepted, therefore it is problematic for governments to transform values into authority.<sup>22</sup> Americans cannot even agree on a national compromise on domestic values, much less control the values of other nations. Even regarding underlying values (individual freedom, rule of law, tolerance), there are widespread differences among Americans, therefore it is challenging to debate where or when to intervene based upon values.<sup>23</sup> As intervention must be sold to the US public, the values differential can be problematic when persuading the public, and Congress, as to which interventions are worth pursuing in the name of *values*.

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<sup>19</sup> United States 2010 *National Security Strategy*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> Russell D. Howard, “*Strategic Culture*,” 7.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Haass, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World*, 13.

<sup>22</sup> Francisco Wong-Diaz, “*Smart Power and US National Power*,” 44.

<sup>23</sup> Francisco Wong-Diaz, “*Smart Power and US National Power*,” 44.



## **Statement of the Research Question and its Significance**

This thesis will evaluate the events and variables that help explain why nations do not respond with military intervention to stop known genocide. Additionally, this thesis will further examine and identify the conditions that may drive nations toward intervention. To find answers to these questions, this thesis uses a comparative case study approach. Three particular case studies will be examined: Bosnia (1994-1995), Rwanda (1994), and Sudan (2003-2005). To assist the analysis of the case study, this thesis will use common variables to highlight characteristics that helped or hindered the intervention. In addition to providing context for each conflict, variables addressed in each case study include: timeline of the conflict to include the speed at which atrocities were committed; geopolitical location, including strategic resources and assets of the nation; ethnicity of the players involved; and the political lobby influencing the political environment. A final determining factor is the US experience in the region, including US social attitudes during the period. Finally, the US response, as well as the response of other international actors (UN, NATO, etc.), will aid the analysis.

## **DEFINITION OF GENOCIDE & THE UN 1948 CONVENTION ON GENOCIDE**

Ever since Raphael Lemkin devised the term “genocide” in his book, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, there has been great debate regarding what actually encompasses genocide, much less how to stop it from occurring.<sup>24</sup> From the United Nations, to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to average citizens, the definition of genocide can be challenging to solidify, much less codify among the world’s institutions, nation-states, and other influential actors. This is not a reflection of a lack of organizations attempting to challenge the status quo, but rather the ability of all actors to come to terms with an acceptable and effective definition of genocide. A clear and actionable definition may help prevent or mitigate genocide and aid attempts to hold accountable those accused of such crimes. This process to define genocide began decades ago and has experienced significant challenges. In fact, the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and

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<sup>24</sup> Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, 79.

Punishment of Genocide (UNCG), the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and the Refugee Convention were all efforts to design political and legal structures for increasing likely participation of most nations in an effort to ease humanitarian disaster.<sup>25</sup> The challenge of legally defining genocide may continue to prove contentious among various institutions, leading to further justification for over-extended debate on the subject. More importantly for the subject of timely intervention, additional debate may cause additional delay for intervention in genocidal situations.

The broad definition of genocide by the UN is not the problem, as most member states accept it. The problem begins when leaders of those states place caveats upon their own obligations to respond. These caveats, and ensuing debate between member states, have limited the potential to stop genocide by minimizing the ability of each individual nation to respond. There are now so many caveats surrounding genocide that the leaders of many member states may hesitate to intervene even when there are strong social or political motives to do so.

After WWII and the horrors of the Holocaust, the 1948 UNCG created a legal structure in which military intervention for humanitarian purposes outweighed the offending state's sovereignty whenever genocide occurred.<sup>26</sup> The first principle, Article 1, is relatively straightforward and states, "The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish."<sup>27</sup> The genocide Convention attempted to close loopholes discovered during the WWII Nuremberg trials of former Nazi German leaders. The intent behind Article 1 was to make genocide a crime regardless of whether

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<sup>25</sup> Bruce Cronin, "The Tension Between Sovereignty and Intervention in Prevention of Genocide," 297.

<sup>26</sup> Bruce Cronin, "The Tension Between Sovereignty and Intervention in Prevention of Genocide," 295.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations, "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," December 9, 1948. Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

the “enemy” was internal or external to a nation or the atrocities were conducted during peacetime or wartime.<sup>28</sup>

Article 2 of the Convention states, “In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”<sup>29</sup>

As US Ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power outlined how a group could be guilty of the crime of genocide, it “had to (1) carry out one of the aforementioned acts, (2) with the intent to destroy all or part of (3) one of the groups protected.”<sup>30</sup> One need not exterminate the entire protected group, only act with intent to destroy a substantial part. If, by chance, a group did not target “national, ethnic, or religious groups,” then killing would simply be seen as mass murder or homicide, not genocide under the Convention.<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, while Article 2 defines what constitutes genocide, Article 3 of the 1948 Convention further describes and attempts to codify the acts that “shall be punishable (under UN law):

- (a) Genocide;
- (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
- (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
- (d) Attempt to commit genocide;

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<sup>28</sup> Samantha Power, *“A Problem From Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide*, 58.

<sup>29</sup> United Nations, “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” December 9, 1948. Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

<sup>30</sup> Samantha Power, *“A Problem From Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide*, 57.

<sup>31</sup> Samantha Power, *“A Problem From Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide*, 57.

(e) Complicity in genocide.”<sup>32</sup>

According to the UN, the Convention was the first human rights treaty adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and it focuses attention on the “protection of national, racial, ethnic and religious minorities from threats to their very existence.”<sup>33</sup> The UN claims the Convention falls firmly “within the priorities of both the United Nations and the modern human rights movement, aimed at the eradication of racism and xenophobia.”<sup>34</sup> The Convention’s role is not meant to be all-encompassing, yet it emphasizes the responsibility of “criminal justice and accountability in the protection and promotion of human rights.”<sup>35</sup>

While the 1948 UN Convention displayed the admirable quality of trying to stop genocide, it did little to quell the violence as the legal definition is too broad to eliminate debate. Conversely, the Convention’s definition was not all-inclusive enough, allowing some mass atrocities to go unpunished. As Douglas Peifer noted of the Convention, “the legal definition...restricted the concept of group identity to national, ethnical, racial, or religious groups. Given that the Soviets would have blocked any measure that broadened the concept to include political and social groups, this was unavoidable at the time.”<sup>36</sup> In an effort to prevent WWII genocide from occurring again, the UN had to turn a blind eye to “Stalinist killings, Indonesian massacres, and Mao’s bloody repressions” to formulate a collectively acceptable legal definition of genocide that eventually would be ratified by most of the UN nations, especially the members of the UN Security Council which have

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<sup>32</sup> United Nations, “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” December 9, 1948. Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

<sup>33</sup> William A. Schabas, United Nations Introductory Note on the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

<sup>34</sup> William A. Schabas, United Nations Introductory Note on the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

<sup>35</sup> William A. Schabas, *Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights*. United Nations Introductory Note on the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Douglas Peifer, *Stopping Mass Killings in Africa: Genocide, Airpower, and Intervention*, 8.

veto powers.<sup>37</sup> While ratification of the Convention was a positive result towards preventing genocide, the openness of the legal definition has proven to be a point of contention that delays intervention while the legal debate continues.

Despite the agreement on a flawed definition of genocide, some member states took their time signing up to abide by the UNCG. The US, for example, delayed ratification for 38 years, despite 97 nations having already done so. Acceptance of the UNCG was first proposed by President Harry Truman and presented to the Senate for approval. The UNCG was only ratified during the administration of President Ronald Reagan, after more than 30 years of heated Congressional debate on the subjects of sovereignty and values.<sup>38</sup> One side of the aisle in Congress wanted to bring justice to those who committed mass atrocities against mankind, while the other wanted to minimize the risk that the US ever could be brought to trial or accept a foreign court's jurisdiction.<sup>39</sup>

Another problem that delayed ratification of the UNCG lies in the Convention's wording. The wording of the Convention was not specific enough about the nature of the violence to prompt a national or coalition response.<sup>40</sup> While the definition of genocide is contentious, the Convention also requires signatories to act upon such atrocities. The 1948 Convention imposes a general duty on nation-states that are signatories to "prevent and punish" those who perpetrate genocide.<sup>41</sup> The Convention requires those nations that are able to assist those in need. The ability to *force* nations to adhere to the requirement of assisting, however, is as contentious as the decision to intervene. This is a product of what scholars have termed "the military intervention dilemma." This dilemma exists for national leaders as they must decide between self-interest and preserving national sovereignty versus the collective interest in human rights and humanitarian crisis and possible erosion of their own state sovereignty.

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<sup>37</sup> Douglas Peifer, *Stopping Mass Killings in Africa: Genocide, Airpower, and Intervention*, 8.

<sup>38</sup> Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, 165.

<sup>39</sup> Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, 163-165.

<sup>40</sup> Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, 65.

<sup>41</sup> United Nations, "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," December 9, 1948. Accessed February 8, 2014, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

To help resolve this dilemma, James Whitman noted that most legal experts believe wars should be fought only where there is an “extreme necessity to fend off imminent aggression or prevent an imminent act of gross evil.”<sup>42</sup> Many would argue that war (military intervention) is not only justified, but that it is a nation’s moral obligation to intervene when “imminent acts of gross evil,” genocide as a prime example, are being conducted against civilians. As the United Nations agreed in principle with the 1948 Convention, *never again* will the world stand by and watch genocide occur. Although *force* (through military intervention) might not be sufficient to halt genocide, it may be morally *necessary*. Force could be required as the means to change the behavior of a group conducting genocide.<sup>43</sup>

The decision to utilize military force can be tumultuous and misunderstood. A way to better understand why national leaders make the political decisions they do is to understand how leaders view the world in theory. An understanding of International Relations theory may help explain how leaders view the world, and most importantly, why leaders make the decisions they make.

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<sup>42</sup> James Q. Whitman, *The Verdict of Battle: The Law of Victory and the Making of Modern War*, 6.

<sup>43</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 147.

## Chapter 2

### International Relations Theory

The previous chapter suggested there has been significant debate on the use of intervention for humanitarian purposes and in support of one's values. Even with generous use of military force to stop humanitarian atrocities, the world nevertheless has seen genocide occur on numerous occasions since WWII. Although nations have intervened for humanitarian purposes, one may ask why nations have decided against this course of action when genocide is occurring. While assisting those in need is a seemingly easy political decision to make, one can list numerous occasions where national leaders did not approve intervention. Naturally, outside observers often question these political decisions. A seemingly *easy* political decision often is met with harsh criticism when the expected decision is not made. For instance, a nation may choose not to intervene during known genocide when the nation spoke out against the atrocities. Or a nation with military forces already operating inside the chaotic, genocidal nation, may choose to forbid their forces from firing upon the hostile forces killing innocent civilians.

The purpose of this chapter is to frame decisions to use force. In particular, this chapter utilizes various schools of thought within International Relations (IR) theory to explain the decision-making logic and rationale to use intervene in another country to prevent genocide. IR theorists differ in their explanation of the dynamic relationship between actors, relationships, and power within the international system. The reason a nation responds or does not respond to genocide with military intervention is explainable through the lenses of various IR theories. Although no single IR theory will solely reflect the decision-making process for a particular conflict perfectly, there are key IR theory elements that may help explain what drives a nation to intervene or choose not to intervene militarily. This chapter will argue that seemingly *easy* political decisions on military intervention for humanitarian operations are not such easy decisions after all.

*How, if, or why* a nation-state decides to intervene militarily depends on a variety of factors. There are domestic concerns, other foreign policy elements, economic factors, election cycles, historical contexts, strategic vision, risk, and an infinite number of others



to consider. Yet how decision-makers weigh and prioritize each issue, and evaluate their impact, is instrumental in the outcome of a particular foreign policy decision to use force. Whether or not a nation decided to intervene on behalf of humanitarian operations is a direct reflection of how decision-makers prioritize security, sovereignty, values, and other elements of international relations. The relationships between these decisions are best analyzed through IR theories. Through this analysis, one can perhaps predict the response of a nation during humanitarian debate based upon the thought process of national leaders. While national leaders will have different viewpoints of world politics, an understanding of the three primary schools of IR thought predict and explain the “how, if, or why” a leader will respond to genocide.

This chapter will address the three main schools of thought within IR: Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism. Although it is not realistic to think that each case of intervention or non-intervention will fit neatly and exclusively into one of the three theories, each will help the reader better understand the decision-making process within each case study. As there is not a *school of genocide*, there are different schools of IR theory. Therefore, understanding these three schools of thought will explain what nations value and how these values lead to intervention or non-intervention during genocide. Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism place primary value on the security of the state, individual human rights, and the distribution of ideas, respectively.

## **Realism**

When debating US military intervention in a foreign nation, one may ask what its strategic importance is for the US. This Realist line of questioning places the value of intervention upon the US, not the nation or people intervention is intended to help. Realism follows the belief that international relations consist of a “jungle,” a constant “state of war.”

<sup>1</sup> This state of war is not simply a continuous state of actual warfare, but the constant threat of war among all states.<sup>2</sup> This constant state of tension among nations drives the

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 18.



international order to a system of self-interest, war preparation, and decision-making calculations based upon relative balance of power.<sup>3</sup> While not all Realists agree on all elements of IR theory, there are basic tenets upon which most agree. Realism is founded upon four propositions. The Realist perspective is best summarized as the belief that survival and self-interest of the nation-state drives actors to make particular decisions that support the survival of their ways of life and ultimately serve in the best interest of their nation-states. Leading Realist theorist Kenneth Waltz wrote, “St. Augustine had observed the importance of self-preservation in the hierarchy of human motivations...For Spinoza, however, the end of every act is the self-preservation of the actor.”<sup>4</sup> Self-preservation underpins the four propositions of Realism.

The first proposition of the international system is that it is anarchic due to the absence of international government.<sup>5</sup> As there is not a formal system that maintains control of all nation-states, a form of anarchy is ultimately the result, according to the Realist perspective. While there are organizations such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)), and non-governmental organizations (NGO) that influence states, these groups lack authority and responsibility; therefore, the center-of-gravity in international relations still lies with the individual nation-states. With multiple states, this results in the perceived anarchy. Due to the anarchic nature, there is “no automatic harmony” among states.<sup>6</sup> With an anarchic system, the threat of violence increases. Kenneth Waltz noted that the state among its peers conducts its affairs at the threatening edge of violence. Because some states may at any time use force, all other nation-states must be prepared to do so as well—or they are living at the mercy of their militarily more capable, and potentially aggressive, neighbors.<sup>7</sup> Without another actor or entity with the authority or capability to regulate states actions, states must choose their own paths. Kenneth Waltz emphasized,

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, 22. Waltz quotes original thoughts in Augustine, *City of God*, tr. Dods, Book XI, ch. xxvii and later in Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part IV, prop. xxxvii, note ii.

<sup>5</sup> Jack Donnelly, "The Ethics of Realism", in Christian Reus-Smit, Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, 150.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, p. 160.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 102.

“Anything that happens anywhere in the world may damage us directly or through its repercussions, and therefore we have to react to it.”<sup>8</sup> This further explains why, during a debate in a humanitarian crisis, those who view the world through the Realist prism may choose to utilize unilateral military intervention over the UN or NATO consensus. For example, if the Realist perceives a crisis in another nation as a threat against its own security, the anarchic nature of the international system may drive the Realist to intervene regardless of what other actors in the world may argue. Conversely, if the Realist deems the conflict outside its own sphere of influence or survival, he or she may choose not to intervene, as the international community does not have the authority to direct otherwise.

The second proposition is that individuals and groups pursue self-interest; therefore, states are the most important actors.<sup>9</sup> A primary reason, according to the Realist, is that states are the only entity legitimately able to conduct war through the use of violence. While other groups can cause violence, large-scale conflict is mainly a product of the nation-state and its military. As Edward Hallett Carr noted, military power is an essential part of the state’s livelihood.<sup>10</sup> Such power becomes not only a tool of warfare, but “an end in itself” with the most committed wars fought in an effort not only to make one’s own nation stronger, but in an effort to prevent one’s rival nation from becoming stronger.<sup>11</sup> A Realist may view a nation’s ability to wage war as the primary factor in justifying why the state (and not an IGO, NGO, or large corporation) is the main actor. If the state’s desire to intervene for humanitarian purposes is present, only the state has the ability to engage in the operations. Waltz further noted that a state will use force to propel its own agenda in the world after analyzing its likelihood of success in conjunction with moments when the state values seizing goals through war over the enjoyment of peace. As each nation-state acts as its own judge, it is the state that decides when and how to implement the tool of violence for one’s own policies.<sup>12</sup> This further drives the Realist assertion that only the state can decide if it is willing to intervene militarily for

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<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 159.

<sup>9</sup> Jack Donnelly, "The Ethics of Realism", in Christian Reus-Smit, Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, 154.

<sup>10</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*, 111.

<sup>11</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*, 111.

<sup>12</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, 160.

humanitarian operations. As only nation-states can legitimately wage war and only nation-states have the authority to act, they are the primary actors in IR.

The third proposition is that all states (groups) within the system are unitary actors, and politics takes place between them. As states tend to pursue self-interest, groups strive to attain relative gain.<sup>13</sup> Because IR is under an anarchic system and states are the primary actors, the third proposition demonstrates the Realist perspective that rational nation-states will pursue those political aims that best increase their own relative gain. In support of this notion, Robert Gilpin presented the Realist claim that states look to improve their influence over other states, as well as to have some leverage over the international economy.<sup>14</sup> This supports the notion, from a Realist perspective, that a nation-state may choose to intervene if it increases that nation's relative power, while it chooses not to intervene when the political or economic risk outweighs the relative benefits. In other words, even when a humanitarian crisis is ongoing, the Realist could claim that a nation would not intervene if there were nothing to gain from it.

The fourth and final Realist proposition is given that the primary concern of all states is survival, international politics are always power politics.<sup>15</sup> To increase its chance of survival, a state builds up military force to compel and combat threats.<sup>16</sup> Kenneth Waltz noted that survival is a requirement to achieve any goal a state may have.<sup>17</sup> Waltz also contends nation-states do not willingly place themselves in conditions of dependence upon another nation.<sup>18</sup> The prerequisite of survival and independence leads states and other actors to make decisions that support their self-interest. A state's value of self-interest may help demonstrate why many nations do not intervene during known genocide. Realism provides a theoretical way to explain why states may not be supportive of decisions for inaction. For instance, state leaders believing that

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<sup>13</sup> Jack Donnelly, "The Ethics of Realism", in Christian Reus-Smit, Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, 150-154.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Gilpin, *War & Change in World Politics*, 23-24.

<sup>15</sup> Jack Donnelly, "The Ethics of Realism", in Christian Reus-Smit, Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, 150.

<sup>16</sup> Jack Donnelly, "The Ethics of Realism", in Christian Reus-Smit, Duncan Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, 150.

<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 91.

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 107.

intervention would result in a significant number of troops killed could conclude it is in its own best interest not to stop genocide. The costs would simply outweigh any possible benefits. Conversely, if a nation's well-being, economy, or critical national interests are threatened by violence or chaos stemming from a humanitarian crisis, the leaders of a nation-state may believe it is in its own best interest to intervene regardless of the moral or values-based argument. Although the Realist perspective can appear to be self-serving and lack humanity, it is quite the opposite in many instances. Noted Realist Hans Morgenthau wrote, "What is actually aspiration for power, then, appears to be something different, something that is in harmony with the demands of reason, morality, and justice. [The foundation of which is found in] orders of morality...and law."<sup>19</sup>

State leaders may have other reasons not to intervene in another country according to the Realist view. Michael Doyle asserts that a nation's failure to accept a system based on national interest is "a prescription for national disaster...and an irresponsible act of statesmanship that places private interests...above public needs."<sup>20</sup> In situations where the nation-state may face daunting tasks that put it at risk, the Realist perspective supports leaders who appear not to support humanitarian operations against formidable foes. Such is the case in genocide or humanitarian operations where hostilities are ongoing. Doyle's claim demonstrates why many nations decide not to intervene militarily when there is a great threat to one's own troops. As states are sovereign and have a need for security, to force a nation to intervene for humanitarian purposes in another nation could be seen as an infraction against its sovereignty, thereby making the intervention illegitimate according to the rules of the system.

Realism is one of the foundational and influential schools of IR thought but it has notable flaws. Virtually all theories are subject to anomalies, outliers, and counterfactual elements. Theory is not reality; rather, it is an abstraction of reality. Realism is no exception and not all examples and case studies can be explained simply as such. Edward Hallett Carr noted, "Consistent realism excludes four things which appear to be essential ingredients of all effective political thinking: a finite goal, an emotional appeal,

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<sup>19</sup> Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 243.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 19.

a right of moral judgment, and a ground for action.”<sup>21</sup> For instance, a decision-maker may be influenced by emotional ties leading to action whereas he or she would not normally be inclined to do so. There may be an instance to fight for a moral judgment, although perceived as a riskier option than choosing to avoid the fight altogether. It could be argued that the tenets of Realism are dated, as they do not take into account adequately the value of institutions, social media, and the spread of ideas or simply values worth fighting for at all costs. Critics from other schools of IR thought, including Liberalism, argue that Realism does not take into consideration the value of the individual or that of the sovereign. The Liberalist view places greater emphasis on these IR elements as the next section demonstrates.

## **Liberalism**

Liberalism supports the belief that international relations place the highest value upon the rights and duties of individuals, not states. Additionally, the Liberalist believes actors should serve to support whatever institutional processes would boost the ability of moral human beings to determine the best course of their own lives.<sup>22</sup> Contrary to the Realist belief that the world is a “jungle,” the Liberalist sees the world as a “garden” that combines the possibility of war, but also of peace. The Realist notion of the “single actor as the state” is countered with the Liberalist belief that the state is vital to IR. In addition, the world also is held together by “coalitions and interests, representing individuals, and groups...and the state’s interest are determined not by its place in the international system,” but by the “many interests, ideals and activities of its members.”<sup>23</sup> A common point of contention for Liberalists analyzing military intervention for humanitarian operations is the distinction between *value of life* and the *value of sovereignty*. These two distinctive elements are dissected in the three pertinent foundations of Liberalism.

First, whereas the Realist perspective emphasizes that the international community is in a constant state of war (though not warfare), the Liberalist sees the world differently. The Liberalist believes the world is not in a state of war and that institutions, individual

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<sup>21</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919-1939*, 89.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 19.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 19.

nations, and other actors can influence international relations. As John Ikenberry noted, the end of the Cold War led to a “unipolar distribution of power,” yet “there is very little evidence that other states are actively seeking to balance against it or organize a counterhegemonic coalition.”<sup>24</sup> The Liberalist would argue this is due to the fact that nations and individuals value cooperation. Cooperation is typically peaceful and often avoids war. It is through cooperation and the ability to come to consensus, without having to challenge the hegemon that creates a peaceful environment equally beneficial for the major national powers and the smaller states.

The Liberalist believes that the world can operate in a world of harmony and cooperation. While nations can balance in *harmony*, this differs significantly from *cooperation*. Robert Keohane stated, “Harmony refers to a situation in which actors’ policies, pursued in their own self-interest without regard for others, automatically facilitate the attainment of others’ goals.”<sup>25</sup> For example, if the world had a noticeable problem with pollution of the world’s oceans, nations would band together to find a solution. While one nation’s findings may help other states, and it is their own self-interest that initiated the effort, the Liberalist would offer that nations could *harmoniously* agree to fix the pollution problem together for mutual benefit.

Conversely, cooperation requires “that the actions of separate individuals or organizations—which are not in pre-existent harmony— be brought into conformity with one another through a process of negotiation.”<sup>26</sup> As in the case of a border dispute, there must be some mutual accommodation to bring the dispute to a close. While both parties still are not in agreement, they must work together to negotiate a mutually satisfactory solution.

Secondly, Liberalists believe the state is not in a constant state of war. Instead, the Liberalist believes IR is a broad-based association of various interests, all intertwined yet

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<sup>24</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, 51.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, 51.



representing individuals or groups with different values.<sup>27</sup> Liberalists believe a state's interests are determined, not by its international role, but by the many interests, ideals, and activities of the group.<sup>28</sup> The Liberalist would argue that a state's position or policy towards another nation, group, or act is merely a reflection of the citizens comprising the state. Most Liberalists would agree there are favorable internal political systems (democracy) when compared to less favorable systems (dictatorship). Under this construct, a Liberalist would argue favorable states are less likely to cause problems and will cooperate in the international community, while undesirable states are less likely to cooperate and are more likely to cause conflict with other states.<sup>29</sup> The resulting discord between favorable and unfavorable state political systems supports the Liberalist view that institutions can help control, influence, and direct international relations into a process that helps regulate states, individuals, and ultimately maintain peace. Robert Keohane said, "Intelligent and farsighted leaders understand that attainment of their objectives may depend on their commitment to the institutions that make cooperation possible."<sup>30</sup> This not only demonstrates the desire to cooperate with institutions, but also that institutions are effective in influencing international relations. For instance, the Liberalist may argue that a nation-state acting unilaterally against the wishes of the UN may delegitimize it. Its action can have second-order effects as a delegitimized UN may, in the long run, further hinder cooperation and harmony among nation-states.

Finally, the Liberalist believes that domestic politics, most specifically different domestic values, have international consequences.<sup>31</sup> Regardless of the nature of the domestic platform or foundation, domestic political effects have influence across international boundaries. Whether liberal or conservative in orientation or policy, the values and behaviors of nation-states affect other nations, create IR institutions, and guide foreign policy. In the 1940s, the US committed to building a wide range of regional and international agreements and institutions, such as Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan, the

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<sup>27</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 19.

<sup>28</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 19.

<sup>29</sup> John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 15-16.

<sup>30</sup> Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, 259.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and peace*, 19.

United Nations, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. John Ikenberry argued without such institutions, it is difficult to believe that US power would have the scope, depth, or longevity it has demonstrated.<sup>32</sup> The Liberalist believes that international institutions can restrain and institutionalize power, but also allow it to be harnessed as a more durable and legitimate means of achieving the common good.<sup>33</sup> The ability to harness legitimate and durable power does have international significance. American power, for instance, is acceptable to most other nations because a stable economy and government relatively institutionalize it. In addition, American power is institutionalized internationally through membership in the UN, NATO, and various trade agreements, among other formal partnerships.<sup>34</sup> This type of stability, the Liberalist would argue, is able to cross borders and spread a positive influence among actors worldwide.

A significant debate inside the Liberalist school of thought is between the value of life and the value of national sovereignty and, more importantly, how these two issues create a natural fault line when debating military intervention by a third party for humanitarian purposes. This argument lies at the root of the Liberalist view. While the Liberalist is deeply rooted in the rights of the individual human being, the same individual privilege is inherent in a nation's sovereignty. Unfortunately, with sovereignty comes the risk that outside nations are unable to intervene when crisis ensues. The best time to stop genocide or other man-made humanitarian crisis is before it begins. The idea of preemptive humanitarian intervention is one difficult to guarantee, as it requires nations to intervene in other nations' affairs as a "precaution" or in order to prevent a humanitarian crisis from occurring. According to the Liberalist, such intervention establishes a dangerous precedent. Martha Finnemore noted modern IR is cemented in preservation of sovereignty as "the United Nations played a significant role in the

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<sup>32</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, 273.

<sup>33</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, 273.

<sup>34</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, 271.



decolonization process and the consolidation of anticolonial norms.”<sup>35</sup> This spirit has been transported around the world and resulted in the belief, according to the Liberalist, that there is “no logical limit to the expansion of...self-determination.”<sup>36</sup> While the value of sovereignty is critical in the Liberalist view, the use of intervention to save lives can blur the lines significantly.

Prioritizing the *value of life* against other political, economic, and social factors is at the heart of deliberation when debating a decision of military intervention to stop genocide. The lack of intervention is not accepting genocide, but simply reflects the decision that other factors are domestically more important to one’s nation. James Whitman stated, “The law of war...is to prohibit evil acts...It (involves) the *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello*, the law of the just causes of war and the law of humanitarian restraints on its conduct...Its aim is to guarantee that wars are fought only for the noblest and most urgent of reasons and in the spirit of the most scrupulous respect for human life.”<sup>37</sup> While intervention for humanitarian purposes may be noble and urgent, what a nation values will determine whether the intervention is seen as *just* or not.

### **Constructivism**

Constructivism is grounded on the theoretical belief that world politics and international relations are primarily outlined through two pillars. Constructivists argue that world politics and the international system are determined primarily by the distribution of ideas rather than by material goods and economic forces. They also agree identities and values of all actors are constructed by these shared ideas as opposed to by nature or self-interest.<sup>38</sup> The Constructivist places an emphasis on the social aspect of relationships, while balance of power is less about the individual and more about the social interaction between multiple actors. What sets Constructivists apart from

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<sup>35</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*, 72.

<sup>36</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*, 72.

<sup>37</sup> James Q. Whitman, *The Verdict of Battle: The Law of Victory and the Making of Modern War*, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1.

Liberalists is the credence the former place on the flowing of ideas and how those ideas shift and reprioritize the world order. While both views put considerable emphasis on the “human” aspect, Constructivists tend to place greater value on ideas and social movements. For example, social media is not new but has been important since the dawn of man. Humans relied on word of mouth spreading from “human association” and travel by foot. Now, with advanced technology, the same discussion (“shared ideas”) that took weeks or months to travel beyond villages is transmitted around the world in mere seconds.

The first pillar of Constructivism, according to Wendt, avers that ideas are more important than material forces. This notion is different from the Realist perspective placing more emphasis on the material items and less on the social. For example, nuclear weapons are powerful military weapons. If two nations had the exact same weapon, the material force of each weapon remains consistent. Yet, if the US determines that those two hypothetical nations are the United Kingdom and Iran, the context of the weapon’s “danger” is now different. The ideas that influence the United Kingdom as compared to those of Iran are quite different in US eyes. Therefore, the Constructivist would argue that this set of ideas towards one nation or another guides international relations and helps establish foreign policy and world order. It is not simply nuclear weapons that make a nation dangerous, but the social ideas and attitudes a nation has regarding their usage (or misuse) making such nations dangerous.

The second pillar is that Constructivists view world actors as being developed by these shifting ideas and values. As Alexander Wendt wrote, “International life (relations)...is ‘social’ in the sense that it is through ideas that states ultimately relate to one another, and ‘constructionist’ in the sense that these ideas help define who and what states are.”<sup>39</sup> For instance, these two concepts may explain why two nations can have varying levels of animosity or sympathy. While the state, its assets, and resources may remain the constant; the state’s ideals and social values may shape the government and alter the ambitions and “nature” of the state. The US and its allies exemplified such behavior with public statements emphasizing the importance of building a coalition after the 1991

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<sup>39</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 372.

invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi forces. While the US could have expelled Iraqi forces from Kuwait unilaterally, its leaders sought to utilize the ideas and values of non-traditional allies. The ability to harness common distrust of Saddam Hussein, combined with the commonly held belief that a sovereign Kuwait must be reinstalled and Saudi Arabian oil fields protected, defined who and what the coalition of states were. As Martha Finnemore wrote, US leaders felt the political need to invest in a coalition and work through the UN. Although the Gulf War may have been a clear case of aggression when violent intentions were apparent and violations uncontested, the Constructivist would argue this points to an even greater importance for multilateralism.<sup>40</sup> The Constructivist may argue that this increased multilateralism is a direct reflection of the importance of ideas, and how those ideas shape international relations. Finnemore argues multilateralism may help nations garner greater influence and legitimacy as it “(provided) political cover for military operations whose legitimacy was contested internationally.”<sup>41</sup> According to the Constructionist, credibility and legitimacy are now more critical in a post-Cold War political environment.

Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver make the assertion that ideas will flow more openly in a post-Cold War environment. They noted, “most of the great powers in the post-Cold War international system are now ‘lite powers’...their domestic dynamics pull them away from military engagement and strategic competition in the trouble spots of the world, leaving local states and societies to sort out their military-political relationships.”<sup>42</sup> A Constructivist might argue that domestic politics matter more in today’s post-Cold War political climate than they did in years past and that nations may utilize military intervention less frequently, as there is less pressure from great powers to intervene in proxy conflicts.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 134.

<sup>41</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 134.

<sup>42</sup> Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, 11.

The increased value of domestic politics and social ideas, viewed through the Constructivist lens, also lends itself to the belief that nations may intervene with those whose plight is more connected to one's own nation, social group, or likeminded ideas. For instance, a Constructivist look at the US response to military intervention in the Balkans may demonstrate that US citizens are more likely to support intervention in Europe than elsewhere in the world due to the deep cultural ties its citizens have. Although the Realist may argue the US had a security interest, as a stable Europe means a stable US economy, the Constructivist may not disagree, but would further point out there is a social aspect as well. Social linkages may not be the only reason the US supported humanitarian operations, but the Constructivist would argue that it might be enough to tip the balance in favor of supporting intervention operations.

Although Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism offer perspectives on why nations and leaders make the decisions they do, one cannot apply cleanly one particular theory to any or all case studies of military intervention for humanitarian purposes. Instead, one can apply the theories to particular decisions that lead to a nation intervening or choosing not to intervene. Most importantly, the analysis of Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism demonstrates one can justify military intervention to stop genocide or, on the contrary, choosing not to utilize military intervention in a sovereign nation or due to the risk to one's own security. Depending on how one sees the world and how one views international relations, the decision may vary accordingly. The valued unit of measure will help determine the context of a given crisis, and the level of analysis a nation places upon that context may determine whether a nation intervenes or not. The value placed upon the state's security, the institutions that attempt to regulate the world's power, or the ideas that spread across nations will provide the justification for political decisions that lead to or hinder efforts of intervention to stop genocide.

The following chapters will look at three cases of genocide in modern history. All three cases analyzed will identify characteristics that demonstrate what nations value and how that value is shaped, thus help explain why the US did or did not intervene to stop genocide in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Sudan.

## Chapter 3

### Rwanda (1994)



**Figure 1: Map of Rwanda**

Source: United States Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>.

From April through July 1994, the Hutu majority in Rwanda slaughtered over 800,000 civilians of the minority Tutsi in a mass genocide.<sup>1</sup> The 800,000 casualties constituted over 70 percent of the Tutsi population living in Rwanda, scarred the nation forever, and created yet another example of genocide despite nations of the world “committing” to stop it since the 1948 Genocide Convention. This case study is the first of three, but stands apart from the others for a number of reasons. The Rwanda genocide case is interesting because those who committed the genocide shared the same “race, language, customs, and confession (Roman Catholic),” as those who were massacred.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, the genocidal killing was quick to develop into an efficient and rapidly moving machine once the physical violence began, despite preceding decades of tribal

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<sup>1</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, xxii. Although this study cites 800,000 killed, estimates for the total number of people killed during the 1994 genocide range from 500,000 to more than one million.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, vii.

hatred and bitterness. For a number of reasons, many of them preventable, outside actors were unable to stop the genocide despite having resources in Rwanda during the violence. The Rwandan case assesses the importance of rapid response to stop genocide, as well as the authorities for decision making of the intervening force at both the strategic and operational during genocide. This case also highlights the significance of US domestic political competition between various political objectives and aims.

This chapter, as well as the subsequent case studies, addresses: the background of the conflict and the timeline of the genocide; most specifically to Rwanda, the speed in which massive numbers of civilians were killed; and, geopolitical location, including strategic resources and assets of the nation. This chapter also surveys the ethnicity of the tribal players in Rwanda, as well as the political lobby influencing the political environment. The political environment also includes restrictions placed on the UN forces stationed in Rwanda. Additionally, this chapter looks at the US experience in the region, including domestic social attitudes to Rwanda. Finally, the US response, as well as the response of other international actors, is analyzed.

### **Background of Conflict**

The 2005 film *Hotel Rwanda* shed light on the atrocities committed during the 1994 Rwandan genocide and generated considerable debate on the reasons for the conflict. While the movie portrayed the acts of courage by a few individuals, the public was also exposed to, in a popular format, the significant challenges experienced by the international community in trying to stop genocide.

Much like other African nations, Rwanda's political and social environment was shaped by its post-colonial characteristics. These characteristics, along with most other nations' ambivalence, exacerbated the conflict, but more importantly, created hurdles for military intervention or any attempt to stop the genocide. Located in central Africa, Rwanda is a landlocked country about the size of the state of Maryland with grassy hills and slight mountains.<sup>3</sup> Rwanda has a temperate climate with rainy seasons, dry seasons,

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<sup>3</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Accessed March 24, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>.



and mild snow in the mountains. Its mostly rural population farms relatively fertile ground, and in doing so, continually alters the environment through the deforestation of the woodlands.<sup>4</sup> Rwanda gained its independence from Belgium in 1962, and its population is made up primarily of the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups. Hutus comprise the majority of Rwanda's population.

Germany and Belgium shared influence and control over Rwanda from 1884 through independence.<sup>5</sup> While the German rule, established with the Berlin Conference of 1884, did not last, both the German and Belgian influence had an impact on modern Rwandan culture and added to the hatred between the Hutus and Tutsis. The *mwamis* (Tutsi Chiefs) ran the nation and tribal society prior to colonization. The Germans allowed the *mwamis* to retain much of the control due, in part, to the German declaration that the Tutsi were "more intellectual and capable" than the Hutu. This German view was based entirely on race.<sup>6</sup> They perceived the Tutsi as having lighter skin and sharply defined facial bone structure compared to the Hutu, being relatively tall, and having Saharan ancestral roots.<sup>7</sup> The shorter, darker-skinned Hutu would be relegated to a lower social status for decades based on nothing more than a shallow racial comparison.

Following World War I, Belgium assumed control of Rwanda (along with other neighboring areas) from Germany through a League of Nations' mandate.<sup>8</sup> Belgian bureaucrats brought different ideas of colonial rule, and in the process, "eroded the power of the king of Rwanda and disrupted the old state apparatus."<sup>9</sup> Soon after arriving, Belgian authorities also introduced the Western concept of money, education, and labor practices. The Belgians still supported the same "Tutsi supremacy" the Germans established and nurtured.<sup>10</sup> With the Tutsi minority comprising the social elite, the mistreatment of Hutus continued. The majority-Hutus were utilized as forced labor to

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<sup>4</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, Accessed March 24, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 4-6.

<sup>6</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 11.

<sup>7</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 11.

<sup>8</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 4-6.

<sup>9</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 4-6.

<sup>10</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 11.

build roads and other infrastructure Belgians required. In addition, they suffered irregular taxes and unfair law practices.<sup>11</sup> To keep a “local” level of control, the minority Tutsi became the “middle management” for the Belgian authority. The Hutu and Tutsi divide was worsened with the establishment of a Belgian identity card for Rwandans. This card stressed a number of physical attributes, such as nose size and height, to classify an individual as either a Hutu or Tutsi. Such racist practices only further stoked the ethnic divide and hatred festering in Rwanda. With Rwandan independence, the Belgians left, but the social and ethnic rift did not.

One of Belgium’s greatest legacies to Rwanda was further dividing the Hutus and Tutsis. With the first Rwandan elections in 1961 the Hutu majority, through their political parties, seized control of the legislature.<sup>12</sup> After Belgium’s 1962 withdrawal, France expanded its influence in Africa by incorporating Rwanda into *la Francophonie*, a loosely aligned group of former French colonies incorporated into a type of “French-African commonwealth.”<sup>13</sup> France believed greater influence upon Africa and its leaders gave France more influence and prestige in the world order. This relationship between France and the *la Francophonie* was also a reaction to a perceived increase in Anglo-American interests in Africa.<sup>14</sup> The following decades resulted in Rwanda, and former French colonies more “interested in pure economic aid,” while France took advantage of “little islands of France” located in Africa, complete with classic neocolonial traits of “domination by political, economic, and social means.”<sup>15</sup> After independence in 1962, the following two years saw the Rwandan Army (mostly Hutu) conducting widespread violence against Tutsi civilians in response to their years of hardship under Tutsi rule. As a result of this violence, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was formed after many Tutsi militia and former military personnel sought refuge in Uganda. In 1990, the RPF’s militia members organized an army (RPA) to fight the extremist Hutu militia, the

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<sup>11</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 11.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, xi-xiv.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Wallis, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France’s Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, 10.

<sup>14</sup> Daniela Krosiak, *The Role of France in the Rwandan Genocide*, 56.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Wallis, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France’s Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, 10.



*Interahamwe*, literally “those who stay together,” in Rwanda.<sup>16</sup> That same year, the RPF/RPA gained victories over the government-supported *Interahamwe*.<sup>17</sup> Although there was periodic violence up to this point, Rwanda was now involved in a civil war with widespread violence.

The four years preceding the genocide saw forceful demands placed upon Rwanda by France, Belgium, and Germany for democratic openness.<sup>18</sup> Their humanitarian aid was conditional on such reforms and more valuable to the incumbent government as the RPF/RPA increased attacks on governmental strongholds. These factors further motivated Hutu extremists and militia groups, and generated more calls to action by the Hutu. France continued to have troops in Rwanda and the UN responded to increased violence and instability in 1993 with the authorization of the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR).<sup>19</sup> Originally a six-month mission with UN Security Council (UNSC) support, UNOMUR eventually grew to a UN Chapter VII mission approved on October 5, 1993 as the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) with Canadian General Roméo Dallaire in command.<sup>20</sup>

The Hutu-led Rwandan government felt Tutsi rebels threatened their power. During this period and throughout the early 1990s, while the Tutsi rebels were gaining territory, President Habyarimana and his Hutu extremist associates continually made threats against the Tutsi with anti-Tutsi rhetoric and inflammatory speeches.<sup>21</sup> Encouraging the Hutu masses to believe the Tutsi were threatening and needed to be “dealt with,” the

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<sup>16</sup> Andrew Wallis, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France's Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, 54. The *Interahamwe* were formed in the early to mid-1990s as a mixture of local militia, disenfranchised youth, and street thugs. After the onset of violence against the Tutsis, the Hutu-led government organized and utilized the *Interahamwe* for hunting and killing Tutsi.

<sup>17</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, xii.

<sup>18</sup> Daniela Kroslak, *The Role of France in the Rwandan Genocide*, 32-33.

<sup>19</sup> Daniela Kroslak, *The Role of France in the Rwandan Genocide*, 43.

<sup>20</sup> Daniela Kroslak, *The Role of France in the Rwandan Genocide*, 43.

<sup>21</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, 55.

government supported universities to publish anti-Tutsi works and supported powerful radio stations, Radio Rwanda and Radio Mille Collines, to broadcast anti-Tutsi screeds.<sup>22</sup>

Government-led hate speech and extremist views permeated Rwanda for the next six months and contributed to growing animosity between ethnic groups until the event that sparked the Rwandan genocide. On April 6, 1994, Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed when shoulder-launched missiles shot down his airplane during its approach into Kigali Airport.<sup>23</sup> This was the spark that ignited the fuel of hatred in Rwanda, resulting in the deaths of 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutus. Immediately following President Habyaimana's death, the call to arms went out to the Hutu masses. The *Interahamwe* sprang to action, motivating and inciting Hutu to "do nothing but kill Tutsi."<sup>24</sup> With revenge on their minds for decades of perceived mistreatment by the Tutsi, bands of Hutu gathered by the hundreds, then by the thousands in local soccer stadiums the morning after Habyaimana's death. The killing began on April 7, 1994 and lasted approximately 100 days. Unlike genocide in Bosnia (Chapter Four) and Sudan (Chapter Five) where the killing was spread out over months or years, the efficiency and speed of the Rwandan genocide was significant. Although the speed of killing in Rwanda was unprecedented, there were significant warnings in advance that, if acted upon, may have prevented this tragedy or at least diminished the number of civilian deaths.

### **Timeline and Speed of Atrocities**

Although the Rwandan genocide of 1994 is known for the "100 Days of Killing," with rapid and efficient killing squads quickly moving through villages, there was sufficient time to thwart some of the killings earlier. Samantha Power, US Ambassador to the UN, noted that while the genocide was rapid in killing hundreds of thousands in a few months, numerous warnings from the UN peacekeepers in Rwanda should have been sufficient to

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<sup>22</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, 55. A popular term utilized by the Hutu radio stations and other media outlets was to refer to the Tutsi as "cockroaches." This created a term easily associated with requiring "squashing" or killing, thus the term was desensitized when the genocide began.

<sup>23</sup> Christopher Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994*, 10.

<sup>24</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, 11.

send support forces or simply adjust the UN mission statement to allow defense of Rwandan civilians.<sup>25</sup> According to Power, General Dallaire, the commander of UN forces in Rwanda during the genocide, had warned UN leadership of the threat against civilians and UN peacekeeping for months in advance.<sup>26</sup> On January 11, 1994, almost three months prior to the genocide, Dallaire warned Kofi Annan, head of the UN peacekeeping division in New York City, that the Rwandan *Interahamwe* (Hutu) militia was registering all Tutsi in the Rwandan capital of Kigali. Dallaire further determined, through informants close to the *Interahamwe* inner circle, the registration was to be utilized by Hutu militia for “extermination” of Tutsi in rapid fashion. He also was warned through other human intelligence sources that Hutu militia would target UN (Belgian) peacekeepers to “guarantee Belgian withdrawal from Rwanda.”<sup>27</sup> The targeting of Belgians proved successful as the *Interahamwe* leaders first instructed the local Hutu youth, unemployed, and militia to simply kill as many as possible, which resulted in Belgian withdrawal followed by others. The *Interahamwe* leaders believed if Rwanda was extremely violent, foreign nationals were less likely to stand in the way of the Tutsi extermination. As one of the young killers and a member of the *Interahamwe* noted, “Rule number one was to kill. There was no rule number two. It was an organization without complications.”<sup>28</sup>

What is most shocking about the Rwandan case study is the speed at which the killing took place. With approximately 800,000 people killed in 100 days, the average day’s death total was approximately 8,000 victims per day—a staggering number in such a small nation. Behind the efficiency and effectiveness of the killing were neighbors, family, and friends. Although Hutu made the efforts to register the Tutsis for extermination, close-knit communities made the targeting easy. Instead of having to rely upon the registration

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<sup>25</sup> Samantha Power, “Foreword,” Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, ix-x.

<sup>26</sup> Samantha Power, Foreword from book, Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, ix-x.

<sup>27</sup> Samantha Power, Foreword from book, Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, ix-x.

<sup>28</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, 10.

of Tutsi or Nazi-styled cataloging, the “généocidaires” simply knew who the Tutsi and moderate Hutus were and where they lived because they were neighbors or friends.<sup>29</sup>

Although hard to comprehend, the closeness of the relationships between Hutu and Tutsi made for an extremely efficient genocidal system. This system was remarkably challenging to international organizations or nations discussing ways to stop the killing, but slow to respond due to bureaucratic impediments or unnecessary debate regarding intervention. Jean Hatzfeld’s book, *Machete Season*, provides an account of the Hutu killers and their personal experience in the genocide. As génocidaire “Léopold” confessed, “Our Tutsi neighbors, we knew they were guilty of no misdoing, but we thought all Tutsis at fault for our constant troubles.”<sup>30</sup>

Once the Hutu-*Interahamwe* were well-established in a routine of systematic genocidal attacks, the continued requests for UN assistance were reiterated. General Dallaire made numerous requests for assistance prior to the violence and also when attacks escalated into genocide. Dallaire requested 4,000 “effective troops” from the UN Secretary General, a number he believed could stop the killing.<sup>31</sup> As the killing raged on the fifth day of the genocide, April 11, 1994, Dallaire made another plea for troops as the Belgians finished withdrawing and the French troops were consolidating at the airport. In many cases, foreign nationals were pulled from threatened villages only to see the *Interahamwe* move in to kill all Tutsi once the foreigners had left. Dallaire noted in his autobiography that the following day, April 12<sup>th</sup>, was “the day the world moved from disinterest in Rwanda to the abandonment of Rwanda to their fate.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> “Généocidaires” is French for “those who commit genocide” and is often associated with those who committed such atrocities during the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

<sup>30</sup> Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, 121. Many of the names of “généocidaires” in Hatzfeld’s book have been changed. All of the interviews were conducted with convicted Hutu murderers who were members of youth militia in Rwanda in 1994.

<sup>31</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, 289.

<sup>32</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, 291.

## Geopolitics – Resources, Assets, and Geography

Chapter Two established that according to International Relations theory, how a nation-state views its own security and prosperity is a key ingredient in the decision to utilize military intervention in a foreign nation. Whether the foreign nation's crisis is perceived to support or detract from one's own security or prosperity can lead to justification for military intervention or not. In the case of Rwanda, a lack of resources and national assets is a key piece of the puzzle to help explain why nations were not completely interested in stopping the genocide. Whereas this study's other two cases (Bosnia and Sudan) will show some level of natural resources—Bosnia in political resources and Sudan with oil—Rwanda had neither. A politically insignificant and physically poor nation, Rwanda had little geopolitical leverage. As General Dallaire noted, Rwanda simply did not matter to the rest of the world. Although Bosnia garnered “full-scale diplomacy” by Western nations, NATO, and the UN, the same nations and organizations “treated Rwanda with indifference.”<sup>33</sup> This indifference may be viewed as legitimizing the violence, creating a hurdle for military intervention.

Many have argued the civil war in Rwanda created the legitimacy required for killing. Opponents of military intervention often hide behind a veil of protecting a nation's sovereignty.<sup>34</sup> With an ongoing civil war, the Hutu hardliners could use the umbrella rationale of the war to justify mass killing. Self-protection and security allowed the Hutus to justify their own atrocities and destroy their opponents, both politically and physically. A lack of international prestige also may be a contributing factor in the genocide.<sup>35</sup> The worst human atrocities of the century have occurred in Central Africa, yet Western nations typically do not get involved. Since Rwanda was not perceived as having significant economic influence or strategic importance abroad, Scott Straus argues

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<sup>33</sup> Andrew Wallis, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France's Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, 7.

<sup>34</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, 7.

<sup>35</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, 17.

this explains why influential power players of the West cannot justify to their constituents the risks associated with military intervention in Rwanda.<sup>36</sup>

Domestic politics can present challenges for support of an intervention based solely on humanitarian warrants. In the US, William Clinton was elected with a popular vote percentage lower than any US president since Woodrow Wilson in 1912.<sup>37</sup> With a lower than average popular vote, coupled with controversial domestic issues such as the FBI attack on the Branch Davidian compound (April 1993), the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy (July 1993), health care reform (September 1993), mandatory gun waiting periods and background check reform (November 1993), and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), President Clinton was surrounded by a divided Congress.<sup>38</sup> According to Gallup, from early January through mid-1994, Clinton saw the steepest decline in his own Presidential Approval Ratings.<sup>39</sup> This political weakness of the President, combined with an attempt to avoid the experience in Somalia discussed in detail in the section on US experience and international actors below, drove a political agenda of non-intervention. Having just experienced Somalia six months prior, Clinton was unable to separate the two crises.<sup>40</sup> In Clinton’s view, Somalia was not seen as feeding the hungry or protecting the innocent, but a “commitment of troops, American body bags, and domestic uproar.”<sup>41</sup> With significant political capital already spent on domestic policies and the effect of Somalia lingering on foreign policy, Clinton was politically unable or personally unwilling to intervene in Rwanda. As a first-term

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<sup>36</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, 17.

<sup>37</sup> President Clinton earned 43 percent of the Presidential popular vote, while incumbent George H.W. Bush received 38 percent, and independent H. Ross Perot received 19 percent.

<sup>38</sup> Public Broadcasting Service, “Timeline: Clinton’s Years in Office, 1992-2000.” Accessed March 31, 2014.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/timeline/clinton/>.

<sup>39</sup> “Presidential Approval Ratings-Bill Clinton.” Gallup Poll. Accessed March 31, 2014, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116584/presidential-approval-ratings-bill-clinton.aspx>.

<sup>40</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 96-97.

<sup>41</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 96-97.



President, this appears to have further convinced members of the Administration to focus on domestic policy, as a repeat of Somalia would hinder chances for reelection.

### **Ethnicity and lobby**

Rwanda, like many African nations, was perceived within Washington, DC, as strategically unimportant to US security. In addition, there was a minimal political lobby for Rwanda domestically. In fact, possibly the most outspoken “lobby” regarding intervention in Rwanda was against US intervention in Africa at all.<sup>42</sup> Ironically, the US soldiers of Task Force Ranger were killed in Somalia only two days before the UNSC vote on whether to send peacekeepers to Rwanda. Events in Somalia greatly affected US decision makers discussing Rwanda.

In the 1990s, the US did not have a large Rwandan population, nor any significant political lobby influencing, or driving, a US military intervention in Rwanda. The US Census Bureau notes that African-born US residents made up only 0.4 percent to 1.8 percent of total foreign-born residents from 1960 to 1990 respectively.<sup>43</sup> Of African immigrants in the US, the total number of Rwandan-born immigrants ranked upon the lowest among all African nations and consisted of fewer than 2,000 people, including both US citizens and non-citizens.<sup>44</sup> A lack of cultural ties in the US may explain the lack of domestic political pressure for US military intervention.

Rwanda’s dearth of natural resources did not help its political chances in the US. Such resources might have provided an economic argument for US intervention. Whereas the following chapters on Bosnia and Sudan will show both social and natural resource interests at stake, Rwanda had neither. The US imported, on average, only \$1M

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<sup>42</sup> The US lack of interest in Africa was not absolute. The US has habitual relationships in Africa, most notably Liberia. Since Liberia was “colonized” by freed African American slaves, modeled its government after that of the US, and was supported by its government for decades; the US government has a natural linkage with Liberia.

<sup>43</sup> Kristen McCabe, “African Immigrants in the United States,” Migration Policy Institute. US Census Bureau sourced in article, July 21, 2011. Accessed March 18, 2014, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/african-immigrants-united-states>.

<sup>44</sup> US Census Bureau data. Rwandan-born US population. Accessed March 18, 2014, <http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/stp-159/STP-159-rwanda.pdf>.

to \$4.8M worth of goods per year from Rwanda.<sup>45</sup> The meager imports, mainly coffee and tea, were products that the US could easily obtain through nations other than Rwanda.<sup>46</sup> Conversely, the US exported very little to Rwanda other than humanitarian aid, with \$2.6M to \$9.3M in exports annually the decade prior.<sup>47</sup> Even without economic interest, one may expect a lobby on behalf of humanitarian action but this was not the case for Rwanda during the genocide. A lack of Realist motives for intervention—political interests, economic interests, and security self-interests—argued strongly against US intervention.

Even non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in Rwanda were not speaking out against the genocide. A result of this silence was a lack of information available to decision makers in the West. Many have argued that influential non-state actors, including NGOs and church organizations, did not want to speak out against the Hutu-led government for fear of reprisal against their on-site staff. Timothy Longman noted that in Africa, religious organizations have a long history of supporting authoritarian governments that have oppressed local populations and taken part in human atrocities, including genocide.<sup>48</sup> Ethnic division of many churches in Rwanda further contributed to the oppression and may have unintentionally assisted the killers during the genocide.<sup>49</sup> Rather than unite ethnic groups, many institutions adopted a self-serving Realist approach to Rwandan relationships, by supporting the Hutu regime for fear of reprisal and relying on government support for supplies and security.

With no political lobby to support an intervention, an Administration seeking to avoid another Somalia, and a lack of reliable media sources motivating the US public to demand their Congress force an intervention, Rwanda seemed unlikely to receive military assistance from the US. As Martha Finnemore noted, in contrast to other interventions, Rwanda was not a question of the “legitimacy of the intervention,” but rather whether

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<sup>45</sup> US Census Bureau data. Foreign Trade – Trade in Goods with Rwanda. Accessed March 30, 2014, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c7690.html#1992>.

<sup>46</sup> Christopher Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994*, 5.

<sup>47</sup> US Census Bureau data. Foreign Trade – Trade in Goods with Rwanda. Accessed March 30, 2014, <https://www.census.gov/foreigntrade/balance/c7690.html#1992>.

<sup>48</sup> Timothy Longman, *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda*, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Timothy Longman, *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda*, 14.



intervention was “worth it” to the US.<sup>50</sup> Just as the Realist perspective would assert, Finnemore noted, “humanitarian claims must compete with other (state) interests.”<sup>51</sup> In the case of Rwanda, there was no US domestic political lobby to argue the intervention was necessary or worth the risk.

### **US experience and international actors**

Most US decisions regarding Rwanda were haunted by its experience in Somalia the previous year. In particular, the images of the bodies of US soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu shaped US foreign policy dramatically. With a lack of political desire to get involved in foreign intervention, the Clinton Administration focused on a Constructivist-style policy to bolster the UN, thus encouraging the international community to take a stronger role in humanitarian intervention. President Clinton committed to improving UN peacekeeping capabilities, promised to upgrade the UN peacekeeping headquarters staff, and said he was willing to allow US military members to fall under the command of UN leaders—a rarity in US policy.<sup>52</sup> The US mission to assist Somalia was transferred to the UN, and its results were highly encouraging in the initial stages. The US Ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, noted that the UN was moving onward towards “unprecedented enterprise,” and was committed to “nothing less than the restoration of an entire country.”<sup>53</sup> Both Clinton and Albright’s Constructivist views of the importance of validating the UN mission in Africa shaped US foreign policy, but in doing so may have limited the speed of US responsiveness to international crises. While members of the Administration valued the UN and wanted it to increase in credibility and viability, the Realist views that permeated the Administration’s position on intervention ensured that the US would only become involved in UN operations that were directly reflective of US self-interest. This is

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<sup>50</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 79-80.

<sup>51</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 79-80.

<sup>52</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 69.

<sup>53</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 69.

perhaps the most significant factor in the US decision to not intervene militarily in Rwanda.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to US intransigence for another entanglement in Africa, most US allies were equally indifferent to Rwanda. The media in the United Kingdom (UK) had similar opinions of the violence, likening the deaths to the normal brutality associated with civil war. Three major news UK media outlets, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Independent*, all focused on Goma refugee camps and needed humanitarian aid.<sup>55</sup> They offered little reporting of the violence in Rwanda or the ongoing genocide, much less a discussion on intervention. As Johan Pottier pointed out, that most of the reporting avoided complex political events in Africa, mainly due to “a lack of political and strategic interest.”<sup>56</sup> France, Belgium, and other nations had virtually the same opinions of Rwanda as the UK and US. In fact, many have argued that the evacuation of all the Westerners sent signals to the Hutu extremists and *Interahamwe* that the West was turning its back on Rwanda.

The US experience and attitude towards Africa may also be a product of disproportionate expectations regarding violence. Christopher Taylor noted that although US inaction to stop the genocide was troubling, more bothersome was the belief among Americans that the Rwandan genocide was simply “African tribalism,” and a “normal” act in Africa.<sup>57</sup> With preconceived notions that civil war and violence simply is “normal” business in Africa, US policy makers and public citizens alike may simply have been desensitized toward death in Africa regardless of its scale. Many influential US government leaders insisted they perceived the killings not as genocide or human atrocities, but as casualties in a civil war.<sup>58</sup> This belief that death merely “happens” in Africa, coupled with the US public policy developments after Somalia, created a culture of apathy for Rwanda. As an “external bystander,” the US decision not to intervene

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<sup>54</sup> Samantha Power, “Bystanders to Genocide,” *The Atlantic*, September 1, 2001.

<sup>55</sup> Johan Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century*, 73.

<sup>56</sup> Johan Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century*, 73.

<sup>57</sup> Christopher Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994*, 4.

<sup>58</sup> Samantha Power, “Bystanders to Genocide,” *The Atlantic*, September 1, 2001.

created an endless decision loop that forced continual inaction. In other words, as the US continued to deny there was a crisis in Rwanda, it further justified inaction. Newman and Erber pointed out that bystanders learn from their own action or inaction.<sup>59</sup> When a nation remains passive during another's suffering, it remains difficult to stay in "opposition to the perpetrators and to feel empathy for the victims."<sup>60</sup> This further shaped the US position on Rwanda and was the foundation for unresponsiveness.

## Response

Despite knowing that atrocities were being committed in Rwanda, members of the Clinton Administration decided it was not in the country's best interest to intervene to stop the killing. In the years that followed, there were reports that the lack of US response was due to insufficient reporting or a lack of actionable information during the genocide.<sup>61</sup> Samantha Power, the National Security Archive research group, and others have noted that this simply was not the case. Members of the Executive Branch and other branches of government had ample information, as well as requests for forces from reliable sources and organizations. The US leaders simply decided not to act upon the data before them. Power noted US officials "shunned the term 'genocide,' for fear of being obliged" to act upon the news.<sup>62</sup> Although the US has admitted its error in not responding to stop the Rwandan genocide, Martha Finnemore noted acidly that the apology issued by President Clinton occurred "conveniently" after the killing had ended.<sup>63</sup>

With the Administration's Constructivist leanings to support the actions of the UN, coupled with Realist views that the US should only intervene where vital US interests were at stake, the Rwandan genocide occurred with minimal US interest and little chance of being acted upon. As Jared Cohen pointed out, the US concept of "never again" was

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<sup>59</sup> Leonard Newman and Ralph Erber, *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, 24.

<sup>60</sup> Leonard Newman and Ralph Erber, *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, 24.

<sup>61</sup> Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide," *The Atlantic*, September 1, 2001.

<sup>62</sup> Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide," *The Atlantic*, September 1, 2001.

<sup>63</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 80.

more in reference to humanitarian intervention in Rwanda than it did with stopping genocide.<sup>64</sup>

Hoping to create international structures capable of handling humanitarian crises to free the US from having to intervene unilaterally, President Clinton sought to implement policy mandating future US foreign intervention requirements. With the memory of Somalia still fresh, the Clinton Administration signed Presidential Decision Directive Number 25 (PDD-25) on May 3, 1994 to set “strict limits on future US involvement with UN” operations.<sup>65</sup> The PDD set criteria to be met in order to justify authorizing US military personnel to operate in UN missions. The criteria listed in PDD-25 significantly limited the U.S involvement in UN operations and clearly stated that the US would only participate in UN missions when the mission “advances US interests” and the UN mission had clearly defined mandates, objectives, and timelines.<sup>66</sup> While this further protected the US from participating in potential future quagmires, it also created bureaucratic limitations in the UN ability to react quickly to emergency humanitarian situations, such as genocide in Rwanda.

There is also evidence that members of the Clinton Administration simply did not see Rwanda as a significant event. While they had discussions about Rwanda, few displayed any sense of urgency or moral necessity. Had members of the Administration felt the killings were serious, the National Security Council (NSC) would have met to discuss Rwanda. Cohen noted that President Clinton did not inquire through the NSC about a possible US response and never called for a “principles” meeting of pertinent cabinet members.<sup>67</sup> It appears as if the President was not willing to burn the political capital necessary to intervene in Rwanda when his domestic political agenda was under considerable pressure.

The US eventually provided humanitarian relief and economic assistance to Rwanda, but never seriously considered military intervention to stop the genocide. In fact, by all

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<sup>64</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 97.

<sup>65</sup> L.R. Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide*, 191.

<sup>66</sup> United States Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) Number 25, May 3, 1994.

Accessed April 1, 2014, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd25.htm>.

<sup>67</sup> Jared Cohen, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide*, 97.

subsequent accounts, the US was a hindrance to military intervention. The US leaders were not only reluctant about contributing to the UN mission in Rwanda, but also lobbied for a UN withdrawal from the country. Following an April 14<sup>th</sup> request by General Dallaire for additional UN forces, after ten Belgian troops were killed, a US delegate told the UNSC that if a vote on the request were taken, the US would vote for a withdrawal.<sup>68</sup> This is critical because with the requirement for food, water, medical supplies and significant numbers of ground force peacekeepers, few nations other than the US were capable of airlifting the large amounts of required equipment rapidly enough.<sup>69</sup> General Dallaire, in his autobiography, cited American political apathy as a major reason for the genocide's success as the US "stifled any urge to act."<sup>70</sup> He noted the US supplied significant humanitarian aid to refugee camps in Goma, Zaire, and so satisfied its political conscience of providing assistance to relieve suffering.<sup>71</sup>

The international response to the genocide in Rwanda was equally inadequate. Even the French appeared apathetic to the situation until it was too late. There was no debate in the French parliament about a military intervention and very little media coverage of events in Rwanda.<sup>72</sup> The French public, media, and even politicians viewed the crisis in Rwanda with "deafening indifference and silence."<sup>73</sup>

The UN force in Rwanda, UNAMIR, was incapable of stopping the genocide. An effective intervention to stop the violence would have required a capable force, adequate and plentiful intelligence, and the ability to make quick decisions both strategically (UN or unilaterally) and operationally (Gen Dallaire).<sup>74</sup> Unfortunately, UNAMIR was not a capable force, and although intelligence was generally solid, leaders in foreign nations

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<sup>68</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 200.

<sup>69</sup> Paul F. Spaven. "A US Strategy for Africa," 28.

<sup>70</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, 518.

<sup>71</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, 518.

<sup>72</sup> Andrew Wallis, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France's Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, 27.

<sup>73</sup> Andrew Wallis, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France's Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, 27.

<sup>74</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, 242.

and at the UN delayed in their strategic decision making, leading to an operational inability to act given the restrictive rules of engagement to which Dallaire and UNAMIR was bound.

Whereas the two following case studies demonstrate a fair level of *desire* to intervene to help prevent genocide, in the case Rwanda there was little or none. In fact, most of the discussion during the crisis sought to justify why nations should *not* intervene. With virtually no economic impact on the world and lacking a significant geopolitical location or resources, Rwanda had little leverage and simply had to rely on “humanitarianism” from the world.<sup>75</sup> With the recent experience in Somalia and pressing domestic issues, the US was unlikely to respond to such a need.

Africa often conjures images of war, killing, and other humanitarian crises. As the Rwandan case study demonstrated, this can desensitize nations and foreign leaders to the violence. Yet Africa is not the only continent that has experienced genocide. As the next case will show, Europe has had its own recent experience with genocide. As the next chapter will show, there are linkages between Rwanda and the Bosnian genocide of 1994-1995 despite the fact they were separate conflicts. These common links help explain why the US and other nations did not intervene to stop genocide in Bosnia.

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<sup>75</sup> Christopher Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994*, 5.

## Chapter 4

### Bosnia (1994-95)



**Figure 2: Map of Bosnia**

Source: United States Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>.

The early 1990s breakup of the former Yugoslavia created new nation-states, but also resulted in multiple civil wars, conventional conflict, and a humanitarian crisis.<sup>1</sup> Worst of all, the breakup also facilitated further violence and animosity along ethnic lines, leading to genocide in the region of Bosnia.

Genocide occurred in different states of the former Yugoslavia at different times. Due to the scope and complexity of the conflict, this chapter will focus exclusively on the genocide that occurred in Bosnia from 1994 to 1995. This particular case is pertinent as it differs from the Rwanda and Sudan cases in a number of ways. The common explanation for why the US did not intervene in either Rwanda or Sudan was that US national interests were not at stake. Given the former Yugoslavia's location in Europe,

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<sup>1</sup> The initial breakup of Yugoslavia created five nation-states: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia, and Slovenia. Today, seven nations make up the former Yugoslavia: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia.



its proximity to key US allies, and the importance of NATO to US interests, the same explanation cannot be used for failure to intervene in Bosnia to stop genocide. Secondly, both crises were under UN/NATO leadership, and as a result there was a lack of authority and a lack of rapid decision-making ability. Bosnia demonstrated the first acts of European genocide since WWII, highlighting the tension between a *desire* to help and the political willingness to do so.

Bosnia's ethnic diversity was a source of violence during the civil war. Within the country Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats made up the majority of the population.<sup>2</sup> Bosnia is a mountainous nation with deep valleys and rough terrain. The differences in ethnicities were reflected in religions as well with Muslims, Orthodox, and Catholics each having sizable populations.<sup>3</sup> Although there was significant fighting between Croats, Serbs, Bosniaks, Muslims, and other minority groups, the majority of the fighting, and the focus of this case study, was the Serbian aggression against non-Serbs from 1994 through 1995.

This chapter follows the structure of the preceding and following ones. The case study of Bosnia is explored in the following way. First, the chapter will examine the background of the conflict and provide a timeline of the conflict. Next, Bosnia's geopolitical location, including strategic resources and assets of the nation, are investigated. The role of ethnicity in the genocide is then examined. The political dimension of the conflict, including the domestic political lobbies and international political considerations are reviewed, including limitations enforced by the UN and effects upon UN forces stationed in the region. Finally, the chapter assesses US experience in the region, as well as the country's response to the region and a range of international actors.

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<sup>2</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Accessed April 8, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>. Bosniaks are commonly referred to as "Bosnian Muslims." Bosniaks are a South Slavic ethnic group that follows the traditions of Islam. Although they are an ethnic group, their religion also sets them apart from other Christian groups in the Balkans.

<sup>3</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Accessed April 8, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>.



It was apparent from the start of the conflict that the Serb priority included ejecting non-Serbs from desired territory in the former Yugoslavia. Early in the war “genocide” was suspected or indicated by Serbs in Bosnia through allegations of ethnic cleansing, executions of Muslim leaders, and other attacks against non-Serbian civilians.<sup>4</sup> Many observers saw the collapse of Communism in Yugoslavia positively as a “victory of liberal democracy,” one in which new nation-states would be legitimized.<sup>5</sup> Instead, historical lines of conflict— “religion, ethnicity, national identity, and region” — returned, and led to a power struggle between ethnicity and power on one hand and state sovereignty and regional integrity on the other.<sup>6</sup>

### **Background of Conflict**

The background to the Bosnian conflict is complex. One aspect of the conflict challenging to pinpoint is where and when genocide occurred and separating these from “standard” casualties of war. Civil war, conventional warfare among multiple nations, and traditional ethnic tension created an environment where retaliatory civilian killings were commonplace and intermingled with internal state war.

Bosnia cannot be understood without first framing its history inside that of the former Yugoslavia in the Balkans region of Europe. The end of WWI altered the political landscape with the “unification” of the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro with the former Austria-Hungarian kingdom’s South Slavic territory.<sup>7</sup> The 1918 decision to fuse together these diverse cultural and historical entities into a single nation—the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes—was detrimental to the survival of the nation and eventually led to significant conflict.<sup>8</sup> The name was changed to the Kingdom of

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<sup>4</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 181.

<sup>5</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič and Mitja Žagar, *The Former Yugoslavia’s Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook*, xiii-xiv.

<sup>8</sup> Rusmir Mahmutćehajić, *The Denial of Bosnia*, 15.

Yugoslavia in 1929 and would be referred to as “Yugoslavia” until its eventual breakup in the early 1990s.

Prior to independence between 1918 and 1991, there was considerable violence and ethnic turmoil within Bosnia. Bosnia declared its sovereignty in October 1991, and then its independence from Serbian-dominated Yugoslavia in March 1992.<sup>9</sup> The 1992 declaration of independence was the culmination of many decades of conflict and political challenges. While WWI led to the end of many empires and consolidation of the area, Alastair Finlan noted, WWII had “more significance for the collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s than much older historical causes for conflict in the region.”<sup>10</sup> This was due to the Axis Powers’ invasion of Yugoslavia in 1941, led by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, and the subsequent ethnically aligned insurgency lasting the duration of WWII.<sup>11</sup> The fighting during WWII within the Balkan states resulted in 1.75 million dead, over 11 percent of the Yugoslav population.<sup>12</sup> More important for the future was the character of the fighting. The different ethnic and political groups fought with absolute brutality, both for and against the Germans as well as with each other.<sup>13</sup> During the war, the Croat-led *Ustasha* capitalized on their common aims with Nazi Germany, as both were nationalistic, anti-Jew, and anti-Slav (Serbian). The *Ustasha* forged a plan for a “Greater Croatia” and committed alleged genocide against Serbs and other non-Croats, actions the Nazis looked upon with indifference.<sup>14</sup> Although the Croats comprised two-third of the nation, the *Ustasha* comprised a small faction inside the Croat population, yet would have lasting impact on the WWII as well as wars to come.<sup>15</sup> While the Nazi

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<sup>9</sup> United States Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*. Accessed April 8, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 13.

<sup>11</sup> Ben Shepherd, *Terror in the Balkans: German Armies and Partisan Warfare*, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Ben Shepherd, *Terror in the Balkans: German Armies and Partisan Warfare*, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ben Shepherd, *Terror in the Balkans: German Armies and Partisan Warfare*, 4.

<sup>14</sup> Ben Shepherd, *Terror in the Balkans: German Armies and Partisan Warfare*, 78-79. Although outside the scope of this study, there is evidence of genocide against Serbs throughout history, notably during WWII. The *Ustasha* and other Croatian entities are accused of numerous events to evict non-Croats from territory, notable areas of Zagreb and Gudovac, while also murdering large numbers of Serbian civilians.

<sup>15</sup> Marko Attila Hoare, *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler’s Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks 1941-1943*, 19.

genocide in the Balkans was simply to “exterminate the Jews,” the Croat-*Ustasha* genocide was designed not to exterminate all the Serbs, but eliminate them as a “national community” and to prevent Serbian independent political life.<sup>16</sup> For instance, if the *Ustasha* could prevent the Serbian population from massing enough nationalists in particular regions of the nation, the Serbs would not pose a threat to the Croatian-led government.

The Serbian population had their own sense of nationalism during WWII as well. With the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia, the *Ustasha* attacks, and perceived Muslim interference, Serb nationalists began their own movement that conducted civilian attacks and atrocities.<sup>17</sup> The combination of multi-ethnic and multi-religious chauvinism and nationalism in a confined geographic space led to greater ethnic tension and divide. This lasting divide and reciprocal hatred ultimately came to fruition during the nation’s breakup. The intertwined web of violence, ethnicities, religions, historical affiliations, and changing governments created an environment that was difficult for outsiders to disentangle during the 1990s Bosnian genocide. When leaders of foreign nations debate military intervention to stop genocide, the ability to discern the actors and the genocide’s root causes is key to their confidence in taking action. Bosnia’s history made it difficult for outsiders to discern the “ground truth,” thus created uncertainty and ambiguity in the minds of decision makers. As a result, the US and other Western nations were confused and struggled for accurate information, one major cause for inaction in the 1990s.

Communist Josip Broz Tito (more commonly known just as “Tito”) emerged from the Yugoslav civil war during WWII in the strongest position of all groups politically and militarily. He consolidated his power after the war and led the Soviet Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until his death in 1980.<sup>18</sup> Tito’s leadership style led to further divisions among the population as his government was founded on coercion, violence, and divided

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<sup>16</sup> Marko Attila Hoare, *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler’s Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks 1941-1943*, 20.

<sup>17</sup> Marko Attila Hoare, *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler’s Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks 1941-1943*, 8-9. Serbian nationalists are commonly referred to as “Serbian Chetniks” or simply “Chetniks.” During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these groups often form the foundation of nationalistic Serbian militias during times of war.

<sup>18</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 11.

ethnicities controlled through fear. Tito believed that only drastic control could eradicate the memories of WWII and ethnic hatred. His idea of “fairness” was to ensure that each of the three major groups would suffer equally and be aware of the fact. For example, if a Bosnian Serb was convicted of political crimes, then a Bosnian-Croat and Bosnian-Muslim would arbitrarily suffer the same fate regardless of their guilt or innocence.<sup>19</sup> Under Tito, this practice of collective punishment was common in Yugoslavia. Bosnia, home to the most diverse Yugoslavian population, was impacted the most by this policy.

Tito also made a number of constitutional changes in Yugoslavia that would contribute to future conflict. These changes, made in the 1960s and 1970s, guaranteed loose federal Communist control, but defined numerous “Socialist Republics” (SRs) based on ethnic lines. The territories of the SRs largely conform to the current national borders of the various Balkan states, including Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Kosovo.<sup>20</sup> Territorial divisions into SRs had two negative consequences: they solidified ethnic group identity along nationalist lines and added another dimension to ethnic competition and contempt. The combination of loose federal territorial control and state control through coercion would last as long as Tito could sustain his vision and will. After Tito’s death in 1980, no equally strong or forceful leader emerged nationally in Yugoslavia, and ethnic tension bubbled to the surface once again. With Tito’s power being absolute through informal mechanisms for control, his death led to their collapse.<sup>21</sup> After floundering in turmoil, Serbian Communist Slobodan Milošević rose to power in the late 1980s.

Milošević rose to power when he came to the political defense of Serbs living in Kosovo.<sup>22</sup> Outside of Serbia and Montenegro, Milošević was despised in Yugoslavia. With perceived Serbian persecution in Kosovo by Albanian Kosovars, Milošević tightened regulations against non-Serbs and began to increase Serbian nationalist

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<sup>19</sup> Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*, 148.

<sup>20</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič and Mitja Žagar, *The Former Yugoslavia’s Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook*, 211-212.

<sup>21</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič and Mitja Žagar, *The Former Yugoslavia’s Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook*, 210.

<sup>22</sup> Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*, 32-33.

rhetoric.<sup>23</sup> With increased nationalism, a form of political rhetoric shunned by many European leaders after WWII, Milošević slowly alienated many European allies and drove a further wedge inside the ethnic Balkan boundaries.<sup>24</sup> The end of the Cold War, Communism's collapse in Eastern Europe, and increased ethnic and nationalistic tension, suggested the breakup of Yugoslavia was imminent. Elections in 1990 saw prominent and strong nationalist leaders elected in the Yugoslav republics, followed by declarations of independence by Croatia and Slovenia in 1991.<sup>25</sup>

The Bosnian declaration of independence was issued soon after those of Slovenia and Croatia. Unlike those declarations, the Bosnian one was met with immediate armed resistance from Serbia, as well as by ethnic Serbs inside Bosnia. Serbs outside the country perceived their influence was declining rapidly. In response, Serbia declared the existence of a "Greater Serbia" that included most of Bosnia.<sup>26</sup> Serb actions may have been in response to the Croatian independence and Croatian President Franjo Tudman's desire to create a "Greater Croatia" and protect Croat interests in the Balkans.<sup>27</sup> Regardless of the reasons, the Serbs in Bosnia, supported by President Milošević, set out to establish sections of Bosnia as a part of the Greater Serbia.

The Bosnian War began during the spring of 1992. In that year, the Bosnian Serb Army (also known as the Army of the Republika Srpska), attacked non-Serbian civilian enclaves throughout Bosnia. Shortly after the attacks, the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was established for Bosnia. Two years later, after a peace deal brokered between Croats and Muslims in February 1994, Bosnia became a battleground between Serbs and non-Serbs.<sup>28</sup> The Serbs in Bosnia were convinced that the majority of Bosnia should be a part of Serbia and were willing to fight nearly unconditionally for it. As Norman Cigar noted, Serbian leadership believed "ethnic cleansing was a rational

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<sup>23</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 16.

<sup>24</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 16.

<sup>25</sup> Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of "Ethnic Cleansing,"* 76-77.

<sup>26</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Branka Magaš and Ivo Žanić, *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991-1995*, 133.

<sup>28</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 146.

policy...with decision makers apparently weighing the benefits and costs carefully throughout the process.”<sup>29</sup> From 1992 through 1995 the Bosnian Serb Army committed genocide throughout Bosnia in an effort to clear non-Serbs from the area for inclusion into the Greater Serbia. Genocide took place in numerous locations, with the most egregious taking place between 1994 and 1995 in the Bosnian towns of Goražde, Zepa, and Srebrenica.<sup>30</sup>

Genocide occurred even under declared protection of the UN throughout the conflict. Numerous cites, including Goražde, Zepa, and Srebrenica, were made “United Nations Safe Areas” in May 1993.<sup>31</sup> With ethnic cleansing, human atrocities, and the blocking of humanitarian aid an issue of deep concern for the US and UN, the UNSC Resolution 824 was passed to protect Muslim enclaves in Bosnia. The UN resolution noted that members of the powerful UN Security Council were “deeply concerned at the continuing armed hostilities by Bosnian Serb paramilitary units” and condemned “ethnic cleansing...as well as the denial or the obstruction of access of civilians to humanitarian aid.”<sup>32</sup>

Despite the UN Resolution and the presence of UNPROFOR, and while the capital city of Sarajevo was under constant siege by Serbian forces, Bosnian Serbs also attacked other Muslim cities. Goražde, an enclave in eastern Bosnia, as well as other eastern cities were attacked in March 1994 despite their status as UN-protected safe zones.<sup>33</sup> Goražde can be viewed as “a case study of the failure of the safe areas policy.”<sup>34</sup> Even when the UN sent in a British Special Air Service (SAS) team to verify reports of atrocities and Serbian attacks, the UNPROFOR command staff in Sarajevo refused to believe their

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<sup>29</sup> Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, 63.

<sup>30</sup> Jay Willem Honing and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime*, xix

<sup>31</sup> David Gibbs, *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 153.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations, “Resolution 824 (1993).” Accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.nato.int/ifor/un/u930506a.htm>.

<sup>33</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 146-147.

<sup>34</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 49.



reports.<sup>35</sup> After a few NATO air strikes against Serbian targets, the city was surrounded, cut off from supplies, and taken over by Serbs.

Zepa, a town in eastern Bosnia, was also a UN protected city, but suffered genocide as the city fell under Serbian siege. Zepa is an interesting example in a discussion of genocide, as the Serbs did not kill large numbers of civilians. The murders of three civilians by the Serbs were committed for instrumental purposes, to demonstrate to the Muslim population there was no hope and they should move from Zepa or face similar consequences.<sup>36</sup> In 2012, former senior commander of the Bosnian Serb Army, Zdravko Tolimir, (the right-hand man of the overall Bosnian Serb Army commander, Gen Ratko Mladic), was convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder and persecution against Muslims in Zepa, among other locations. The UN Tribunal conviction noted that genocide occurred in Zepa as Tolimir killed the three civilians for “important symbolic purpose, ‘signaling there was no hope for survival of this community’.”<sup>37</sup> Although the killing of “only” three people may not seem like genocide to some, it shows that events cannot be viewed in a vacuum. When the violence is linked to intent and framed in the context of the conflict, the killings in Zepa can be seen instead as part of the Serbian plan to coerce non-Serbs into fearing for their lives if they remained in traditionally Serbian regions. As Chapter One illustrated, this form of genocide is outlined in Article 2 of the 1948 Genocide Convention.

Srebrenica, a town in eastern Bosnia, has become the most recognizable symbol of the Bosnian genocide for the West. Srebrenica is a symbol of Western moral shame, and is reflective of all the issues that prevent outside states from taking action when they can. Srebrenica is an example of having the means and ability to stop genocide, but lacking the moral imperative to do so at the risk of losing political capital. Throughout most of

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<sup>35</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 50.

<sup>36</sup> Marlise Simons. “Court Convicts a Bosnian Serb General of Genocide.” *The New York Times*, December 12, 2012. Accessed April 13, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/13/world/europe/zdravko-tolimir-former-commander-of-bosnian-serb-army-is-convicted-of-genocide.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/13/world/europe/zdravko-tolimir-former-commander-of-bosnian-serb-army-is-convicted-of-genocide.html?_r=1&).

<sup>37</sup> Marlise Simons. “Court Convicts a Bosnian Serb General of Genocide.” *The New York Times*, December 12, 2012. Accessed April 13, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/13/world/europe/zdravko-tolimir-former-commander-of-bosnian-serb-army-is-convicted-of-genocide.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/13/world/europe/zdravko-tolimir-former-commander-of-bosnian-serb-army-is-convicted-of-genocide.html?_r=1&).

the 1992-95 Bosnian Civil War, Srebrenica was an enclave under control of the Bosnian Army and was home to thousands of Bosnian Muslims from the surrounding hills.<sup>38</sup> Bosnian Serb forces surrounded and shelled Srebrenica, while Bosnian Army forces attacked surrounding Serb villages in retribution.<sup>39</sup> In 1993, the UN declared Srebrenica a demilitarized “safe area,” which called for UN protection under the so-called UNPROFOR.<sup>40</sup> In July 1995, Serb forces invaded and took control of Srebrenica. Once under Serbian control, members of the Bosnian Serb Army immediately rounded-up and killed more than 7,000 men and boys and banished 23,000 women and children from Srebrenica, sometimes under the watchful “impartial” observation of UN forces.<sup>41</sup> In 2001, the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) found that the mass executions of Srebrenica Muslims males and the expulsion of the females constituted genocide.<sup>42</sup>

### **Timeline and Speed of Atrocities**

Unlike the Rwandan case study, in which genocide occurred like a fast-moving prairie fire sparked by the death of a president, the Bosnian genocide occurred more like a slow burn and was much more difficult to observe. The genocide proceeded slowly and methodically over many months and years and was conducted by various groups. Given its duration and pace, the Bosnian genocide should have been preventable through military intervention. A significant causal factor in the genocide, and an element of endless debate, was US political decisions in the early 1990s limiting US interventions abroad, mainly as an effort to rally political support for domestic issues.<sup>43</sup> These

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<sup>38</sup> Nadar Mousavizadeh, *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 118-119.

<sup>39</sup> Nadar Mousavizadeh, *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 118-119.

<sup>40</sup> Nadar Mousavizadeh, *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 118-119.

<sup>41</sup> Jay Willem Honing and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime*, xviii-xix.

<sup>42</sup> United Nations, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Accessed May 3, 2014, <http://www.icty.org/sid/10913>.

<sup>43</sup> Although President Clinton spoke out against ethnic cleansing during his election campaign, the fallout from Somalia and pressure within his party to pass a range of domestic legislation, particularly a comprehensive health care system almost ensured the Clinton administration would avoid committing troops in Bosnia.



decisions, according to some authors, had lasting effects and may have contributed to the genocide of 1994-1995. David Rieff, among others, has argued that a chief reason for the protracted nature of the war, and the genocide that occurred, was that the US, United Kingdom, or France never demonstrated willingness or desire to intervene militarily to stop the killing.<sup>44</sup> This lack of political willingness to rely on a Constructivist approach to leverage more UN or NATO power delayed actions to prevent genocide.

The absence of US military intervention to stop genocide reflected a Realist approach to minimize risk to US troops because the conflict in Yugoslavia was not seen as a direct threat to US security. At the same time the Clinton Administration took a Constructivist approach to problems of ethnic conflict, and in doing so, passed the responsibility to stop genocide to others nations or organizations, such as the UN or NATO. The desire within the Administration to stop genocide, yet rely on others to conduct the operations, was ineffective in stopping atrocities. A lack of US political resolve, coupled with lack of a formidable foe in Bosnia, led Serbian leader Milošević to act more aggressively.<sup>45</sup> Due to political pressures from the US and its allies, the UN was empowered to conduct mediation. This was problematic as the UN is only powerful enough to stop genocide when the most powerful and influential member states unequivocally support the UN initiatives. Unfortunately, the US did not have the political fortitude to intervene, and other NATO members with the means to intervene continued to debate the legality of intervention. The result of this unwillingness and prevarication was that genocide continued in Bosnia. Both Presidents George H.W. Bush and William Clinton were torn between utilizing massive military power against the Serbs or minimizing the US military presence due to the potential risk of massive US casualties in an election year.<sup>46</sup> The creation and fielding of UNPROFOR may lead one to conclude this force should have protected civilians, thus decreasing the violence.<sup>47</sup> In reality, UNPROFOR's presence

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<sup>44</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 15.

<sup>45</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 118-119.

<sup>46</sup> David Gibbs, *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 142.

<sup>47</sup> The United Nations Protection Force comprised almost 30,000 troops in the former Yugoslavia to monitor and encourage peace during the breakup of Bosnia and while various civil wars were ongoing. UNPROFOR's mandate changed from solely

may have actually lengthened the conflict and led to more civilian deaths as the mission fell well short of protecting civilians.

By relying on the UN and its slow approval processes for the deployment of forces, US decision makers ensured that the genocide in Bosnia would continue uninterrupted. As the previous case studies demonstrated, it is difficult for a single democratic nation-state to align its political structure to intervene to uphold values, much less getting the leaders of several nations to agree upon a common solution to an obvious problem. This is both strength and a weakness of democracies as they must debate issues and arrive at a level of consensus, before taking action. When uncertainty is introduced into the debate, as in the case of Bosnia, the result is often disagreement or deadlock. Constructivist political tendencies to utilize the UN (and NATO) within the Clinton Administration led the US to further prolong the war in Bosnia as consensus on action could not be reached politically. President Clinton noted in his memoirs, “I didn’t want to divide the NATO alliance by unilaterally bombing Serb military positions.”<sup>48</sup> This led to a more diplomatic and much less robust means of coercion than the use of force, yet there was tension within the UN and NATO on the decision to employ these means as well.

One means of coercion is an arms embargo. Senior US leaders supported a 1991 arms embargo preventing weapons from being imported by former Yugoslav republics, in the hope of limiting the violence within the countries by denying key military supplies. The decision the following year to maintain the UN arms embargo on Bosnia may have strengthened Serbian resolve against the Bosnia Muslims.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the former Yugoslavian arms industry was known internationally for its level of self-sufficiency. Much of that industry resided in Serbia and Croatia, not Bosnia. An unintended consequence of the arms embargo was denying arms to Bosnian Muslims to protect themselves. Diplomatic efforts alone, without a substantial threat or use of force, only

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monitoring to delivering humanitarian aid, guarding airports, and protecting Red Cross convoys.

<sup>48</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 513.

<sup>49</sup> George H.W. Bush, “Statement on US Recognition of the Former Yugoslav Republics,” April 7, 1992. George H. W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum. Accessed April 10, 2014, [http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=5134&year=1992&month=all](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=5134&year=1992&month=all)

extended the conflict and encouraged further Serbian aggression and further contributed to the genocide in Bosnia.

### **Geopolitics – Resources, Assets, and Geography**

Senior US leaders had little understanding of the complexity, nuanced historical context of the Balkan conflict. From the 1991 Yugoslav breakup to the mid-1990s, the US policy followed a Realist line of reasoning that focused on US national interests and the potential consequences of actions on US national power.<sup>50</sup> This reasoning led to a “passive” attitude toward the violence in Bosnia and drove both media and leadership to focus on geopolitical relationships in the Balkans and surrounding countries, as opposed to the atrocities occurring in plain sight.<sup>51</sup> The realization by US leaders that genocide was occurring in the Balkans was often shrouded in the shadow of civil war violence, as well as the political fog discussed in the ethnicity and identity section below. The question of “what to do about it” led to significant political debate within the Clinton Administration about the strategic importance of the conflict.

Geography played a key role in discussions on the strategic importance of Bosnia. Burg & Shoup noted, Bosnia is located along a prime “line of communication” (LOC), linking the interior of Europe with the Adriatic Sea.<sup>52</sup> Just as the international relations chapter outlined, a nation-state will often intervene militarily when its own security or safety is in jeopardy. This Realist view may help explain why nations did not intervene to stop genocide in Bosnia. John Dumbrell noted that the mid-1990s saw a resurgence of Liberalist views and an emphasis on global institutions. He noted President Clinton announced, “For the very first time in all of history, more people on this planet live under democracy than dictatorship,” and that leadership was under a “family of nations’.”<sup>53</sup> Such Liberalist views led to the UN and NATO assuming leadership roles to mitigate the

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<sup>50</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 411.

<sup>51</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 411.

<sup>52</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 18.

<sup>53</sup> John Dumbrell, *American Thought and Culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, edited by Martin Halliwell and Catherine Morley, 37.

violence in Bosnia, yet both institutions lacked the authority or autonomy to conduct operations swiftly or effectively. They may have also led to delayed responses, unclear guidance, and they prolonged the conflict.

The geographical location of Bosnia is significant not solely due to its rich natural resources and location in the Balkans, but for its place in the European community. Although some may argue that a Realist view of the atrocities in Bosnia would constitute *greater* drive for military intervention, others may argue instead such considerations actually provide greater *disincentives* for use of military force. Former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, US General Wesley Clark, noted the weight of war and its resulting destruction always weighs heavily on the minds of European leaders when considering military options.<sup>54</sup> Clark stated, “The memories of the destruction of the WWII, the millions of refugees, the young men in uniform lost forever, and the lasting tragedy and shame of aggressive attacks on civilians were always present.”<sup>55</sup> This Constructivist opinion of the WWII legacy is key, yet the Realist-centric internal politics of Europe caused greater delay in response for fear of escalating the conflict.

The European nations were divided on how and when to intervene in the Balkans. Paul Williams noted that while US decisions on Bosnia were ultimately based its own self-interest, the European nations pursued similar goals. He stated that the Russians wanted to honor “territorial integrity,” the Germans were motivated by “economic interests,” while the British wanted to maintain their role as a world power.<sup>56</sup> Simultaneously, the French wanted to manage the world’s “balance of power,” while on the fringe, and the Chinese were waiting to pick up the pieces for their own political advantage.<sup>57</sup> Regardless of the “Never Again” rhetoric, the end result in Bosnia was very few nations were acting in a manner to stop genocide. The will of the European leaders to stop the genocide was only as strong as the “collective unity” of the European nations

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<sup>54</sup> Wesley Clark, *Waging Modern War*, XL.

<sup>55</sup> Wesley Clark, *Waging Modern War*, XL.

<sup>56</sup> Paul Williams, *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991-1995* (edited by Branka Magaš and Ivo Žanić), 274.

<sup>57</sup> Paul Williams, *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991-1995* (edited by Branka Magaš and Ivo Žanić), 274-275.

and leaders.<sup>58</sup> These individual state “Realist objectives,” coupled with the Constructivist view in which states should but did not work collectively through the UN to intervene, led to inaction and failure.

As in the case of Rwanda, Bosnia was competing for attention and resources against challenges within the US political system domestically. With limited political capital outlined in detail in the previous chapter, the Clinton Administration was not going to squander what little it had for military intervention in Bosnia, with the UN path unavailable. Although members of the Clinton Administration condemned the Bush Administration for being “weak” in Bosnia, US foreign policy under Clinton continued to founder as genocide was committed in Bosnia and elsewhere.<sup>59</sup> With domestic issues pressing at home, Clinton called for a “lift and strike” strategy: lift the arms embargo and strike Serbian targets. When major allies (mainly Britain and France) objected, the Clinton Administration dropped the strategy, as it would have required the US to act unilaterally.<sup>60</sup> With the continued push for multilateral solutions, the Clinton Administration placed domestic priorities over international moral and humanitarian ones.

### **Ethnicity and lobby**

Prior to violent outbreak, Bosnia was an ethnically “segmented society,” with Serbs, Croats, and Muslims all able to live under the umbrella of their own individual institutional and societal norms.<sup>61</sup> Yet as the background section above pointed out, ethnicity divided the country. The European identity aspect was a common linkage that many observers believed would drive European nations to intervene to stop genocide in their own backyard. With significant European cultural ties to the US, coupled with

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<sup>58</sup> Alastair Finlan, *The Collapse of Yugoslavia: 1991-1999*, 66.

<sup>59</sup> Nadar Mousavizadeh, *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 61.

<sup>60</sup> Nadar Mousavizadeh, *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 61.

<sup>61</sup> Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, 20.

stigma over failing to act more decisively to stop genocide in WWII, led some to conclude the US would pay close attention to Balkans.

Unlike the African nations of Rwanda and Sudan, Bosnia had notable political influence and lobby with a sizable Yugoslavian-born population in the US. This lobby was combined with considerable European influence and cultural ties with the US. In 1990 the number of Yugoslavian-born US citizens totaled 141,516 people.<sup>62</sup> While this figure is marginal in the overall US population, a much greater source of political influence in the US were the 4,350,403 Europeans, and most importantly, the 1,231,372 Eastern European immigrants whose ancestors suffered greatly through genocide during WWII.<sup>63</sup> This cultural link between Europe and the US provided significant political leverage that forced the Clinton Administration to “do something” to stop genocidal violence. Yet the US delayed military intervention as Bosnia was not perceived as vital to US security or interests.

Economic factors were also capable of supporting the case for US intervention. The US had significant economic trade interests with Yugoslavia. According to the US Census Bureau, the US exported commercial goods ranging from \$461M to \$594M per year from the mid-1980s through 1990. The US imported significantly as well ranging from \$542M to \$841M during the same period.<sup>64</sup> With the scale of these economic interests, one could have expected a lobby to intervene, but that was not the case for Bosnia.

A number of authors have argued that media coverage of the genocide contributed to the lack of a lobby supporting US intervention. Just as the Rwanda genocide failed to generate US support for intervention, the Bosnian War stimulated popular “interest” that fell well short of US military involvement. Stjepan Meštrović noted such interest was a

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<sup>62</sup> US Census Bureau data. “Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population: 1960-1990.” Internet Release Date: March 9, 1999. Accessed April 9, 2014, <https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab03.html>.

<sup>63</sup> US Census Bureau data. “Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population: 1960-1990.” Internet Release Date: March 9, 1999. Accessed April 9, 2014, <https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab03.html>.

<sup>64</sup> US Census Bureau data. Foreign Trade – Trade in Goods with Yugoslavia (former). Accessed April 9, 2014, <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c4790.html#1985>.



result of US media preserving its impartiality by giving all sides in the conflict an opportunity to tell their story. At the same time, US media outlets ignored genocide and other atrocities by filtering their coverage through the lens of “US interests.”<sup>65</sup> In fact, many US media reports simply missed the mark altogether as many national leaders concluded military intervention would hinder humanitarian aid efforts.<sup>66</sup> Such reports not only hurt the civilian population, but also hindered efforts for intervention and further muddled perceptions.

A contributing factor towards inaccurate media coverage may have been a lack of “truth data” from the region, mainly the front lines. The lack of “truth” may not have been from a lack of information, but in the ability to interpret the data or to believe what it was showing. Whether or not this was a result of misinterpretation, or merely a refusal to believe the reports of genocide, it led to inaction. David Rieff pointed out that many journalists and Bosnians perceived that the UN was not impartial in the conflict, but seemed to be collaborating with the Serbs.<sup>67</sup> Such perceptions point out that *inaction* can have the same result as *collaboration*, for the failure to stop genocide from happening can also empower those conducting the genocide to keep killing.

With minimal domestic political support for military intervention, a Presidential administration seeking to prevent another Somalia, and competing domestic policy priorities with limited political capital, meant Bosnia received minimal help from the US. Stjepan Meštrović noted the US fear of a “Vietnam quagmire” focused and drove a policy “on the past rather than the present.”<sup>68</sup> In the case of Bosnia, the “Vietnam quagmire,” coupled with a newly minted “Somalia quagmire,” cemented US policy to avoid risk at all costs. With the US political opposition to the domestic agenda looming, the Clinton Administration concluded unilateral military intervention to stop genocide in Bosnia was not worth the risk. Political risk aversion removed a number of military options from consideration and may have further allowed the Serbs to commit further acts of genocide.

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<sup>65</sup> Stjepan Meštrović. *Genocide After Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War*, 132-133.

<sup>66</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 14-15

<sup>67</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 193.

<sup>68</sup> Stjepan Meštrović. *Genocide After Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War*, 13.



## US experience and international actors

WWII shaped the US experience towards genocide, as it did for the country's European allies. Despite the collective shame over not taking more decisive action sooner to stop Nazi genocide, or in the case of some European nations by contributing to it, neither the US nor its European allies were enthusiastic about intervening individually or together to stop the atrocities in Bosnia. The history of recent US interventions in Vietnam and Somalia also tempered enthusiasm for foreign entanglements regardless of the moral imperative to stop genocide.

As a result of these experiences, the US Permanent Representative to the UN, Madeleine Albright, outlined five questions that should be asked prior to the US supporting a UN mandated intervention in September 1993. These questions would shape US discussions on a possible response to Bosnia and included the following: "Is there a real threat to International peace and security? Does the proposed mission have clear objectives and can its scope be clearly defined? Is a cease-fire in place, and have the parties to the conflict agreed to a UN presence? Are the financial resources needed to accomplish the mission available? And can an end point to the UN participation be identified?"<sup>69</sup> While these questions were discussed and debated, President Clinton restated them four days later in a speech to the UN General Assembly. During this speech Clinton insinuated that his position and purpose for speaking that day was to make it more difficult for the UN to initiate peacekeeping operations around the world. He stated, "The United Nations simply cannot become engaged in everyone of the world's conflicts. If the American people are to say yes to UN peacekeeping, the United Nations must know when to say no."<sup>70</sup> As the debate continued, the criteria Albright introduced eventually grew from five initial questions to 17 when the US was asked to participate in peacekeeping operations in a combat environment.<sup>71</sup>

The growth of the number of questions and criteria was a significant response to the cost in political capital at stake for success Presidential administrations. Intervention is

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<sup>69</sup> Richard Haass, *Intervention*, 17.

<sup>70</sup> Richard Haass, *Intervention*, 17.

<sup>71</sup> Richard Haass, *Intervention*, 17.

intimately tied in the American public's mind with the idea of "nation-building." Nation-building in states with little to no direct, readily communicable strategic value to US interest was a political lightning rod for many Americans. As Keith Shimko argued, "Somalia (and other military interventions) raised concerns about committing American force to ill-defined missions without clear exit strategies."<sup>72</sup>

The US and other Western powers were content to contain the violence to Bosnia, but not committed to stopping violence within its borders. The memory of WWII and the massive destruction it caused to Europe, led many Western leaders to seek to prevent the violence from escalating. As a result, those leaders sought to minimize military intervention. The failure to intervene may have fueled Serbian violence, but also led to genocide not only being *misdiagnosed* but perhaps *created*.

As with Rwanda, the Clinton Administration was committed to improving the UN peacekeeping capability. Such improvements included a promise to upgrade the UN peacekeeping headquarters staff. In the drive to further legitimize the UN's peacekeeping abilities, the US may have minimized its ability to effectively intervene.<sup>73</sup> Just as Rwanda demonstrated Clinton and Albright's Constructivist tendencies in validating the UN mission, so too did Bosnia. The Administration valued the UN and sought to bolster the organization's credibility, but the Realist views of many of the Administration's members toward intervention ensured that the US would only become involved in UN operations directly reflective of US interests. This paradox is a significant factor in explaining the US decision not to conduct a unilateral military intervention in Bosnia.<sup>74</sup>

## Response

Although the US and Western powers did *assist* in Bosnia, this thesis is not about assistance but rather conducting military intervention to stop genocide. A common thread in the history of genocide is that while many national leaders claim to offer *help*, few go as far as intervening to stop it. Bosnia is no exception. David Gibbs argued the

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<sup>72</sup> Keith Shimko, *The Iraq Wars and America's Military Revolution*, 102.

<sup>73</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*, 69.

<sup>74</sup> Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide," *The Atlantic*, September 1, 2001.

Bush Administration's position to avoid military intervention in the former Yugoslavia was the result of General Colin Powell's belief (and advise to President Bush) that protecting the Muslims against armed Serbs could "lead to a Vietnam-style quagmire."<sup>75</sup> Clinton's election as President in 1994 saw increased discussion of military intervention within his Administration, but little changed in terms of using force to stop genocide. Instead, the increased discussion of military intervention was "to prove NATO's relevance."<sup>76</sup> With a policy of increasing the relevance of the UN and NATO, the US was able to relinquish a leadership role in stopping genocide in Bosnia. Unfortunately, the leaders of a number of other nations had the same idea. David Rieff noted, "The West...(great powers of North America and Europe), chose to do anything but intervene."<sup>77</sup>

Rieff argues the US and its allies did not make an effort to halt atrocities in Bosnia but were content to contain the violence. During 1994 and 1995 the fighting continued in Bosnia, and grew in scope and brutality, but the US response was limited for a number of reasons. First, the Clinton Administration ruled out the commitment of US ground forces as politically untenable. Second, the Western Allies denied US options to conduct a massive aerial campaign in support of UNPROFOR for fear of the potential losses to humanitarian workers. Finally, the embargo precluded the arming of the Bosnian-Croats and other non-Serbs desiring the ability to protect themselves, removing further policy options.<sup>78</sup> Although the US led "one of the largest and most heroic humanitarian relief efforts" in Bosnia, this effort was offset by a lack of diplomacy backed by military force.<sup>79</sup>

When violence first broke out in the region in 1991, Anthony Lewis contends President Bush did not pay close attention to violence in Yugoslavian territory as Bush believed it was primarily a "European problem," thus, the European nations should deal

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<sup>75</sup> David Gibbs, *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 130.

<sup>76</sup> David Gibbs, *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 155.

<sup>77</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 13.

<sup>78</sup> Richard Haass, *Intervention*, 160-161.

<sup>79</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*, 13.

with it.<sup>80</sup> Such a belief was problematic for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the inability of European nations to conduct a military intervention to stop genocide. NATO had sufficient forces to intervene, but the command and control and leadership of its operations was typically assumed by Americans.<sup>81</sup> Even after President Clinton took office in January 1993, this belief—the former Yugoslavia was a European problem requiring a European solution—continued ahead with minimal changes.

One method of intervention to stop violence is the use of economic sanctions in lieu of military force. Sanctions are considered to be more palatable and less risky for decision makers. Yet, in the case of Bosnia, an element of the economic sanctions in place was an arms embargo passed at the request of Serbian President, Slobodan Milošević, in 1991.<sup>82</sup> The UN Security Council (UNSC) passed this resolution to deny additional military supplies for the conflict, and thereby minimize the violence in Bosnia. While the embargo may have minimized the Bosnian ability to wage war, it also denied them the ability to defend against Serbian attacks.<sup>83</sup>

After the 1991 breakup, the Bosnians were loosely governed by a group of national leaders of various political, religious, and ethnic groups. Two emergent leaders that the US negotiated with were a Muslim politician, Alija Izetbegovic, and a militant Serbian nationalist, Radovan Karadzic.<sup>84</sup> With Izetbegovic and the Muslims seeking independence, and Karadzic and the Serbs seeking to be “absorbed” into Milošević’s “Greater Serbia,” the US was unable to negotiate a peaceful option upon which all parties could agree. A Bosnian referendum vote occurred on March 1, 1992, with a vote for Independence winning by a wide margin due to Serbian protest and abstinence from the vote. With an election year looming, and the two Bosnia sides unable to compromise,

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<sup>80</sup> Anthony Lewis, “War Crimes,” *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 60. (Editor: Nader Mousavizadeh).

<sup>81</sup> Anthony Lewis, “War Crimes,” *The Black Book of Bosnia: The Consequences of Appeasement*, 60. (Editor: Nader Mousavizadeh).

<sup>82</sup> Rusmir Mahmutćehajić, *The Denial of Bosnia*, 37.

<sup>83</sup> Rusmir Mahmutćehajić, *The Denial of Bosnia*, 37.

<sup>84</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 509.

President George H.W. Bush was unable or unwilling to commit additional resources to what he perceived as a European problem.<sup>85</sup>

The Bush Administration did commit to influencing the UN to impose economic sanction on Serbia. President Bush, through the US Department of Treasury, blocked more than \$450 million in Serbian funds, and shut down two Serbian banks in New York City, while also sealing the offices of Yugoslavian-Serbian subsidiaries across the U.S by signing Executive Order 12808 on May 30, 1992.<sup>86</sup> Although the Bush Administration appeared to take action based on Constructivist ideas to maximize UN participation, in reality, such actions were trumped by Realist views that could not connect the Balkans to US national security and interests in a meaningful way. While Bush claimed in his letter to Congressional leaders that the “threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the US,” led to the sanctions, the limitation of the same interests shaped the belief that the US should limit its response.<sup>87</sup> This belief carried throughout the conflict, even during a slowly unfolding, visible case of genocide.

The international response to genocide was identically inadequate. Western European misunderstanding of the “ground truth” in Bosnia, as well as the nuances of the geopolitics and ethnic ties, led to a misdiagnosis of the root causes of the conflict. Western “peace plans” served Western as opposed to Bosnian interests and may have led to more Serbian acts of genocide.<sup>88</sup> All of the proposed peace plans (the Cutileiro, Vance-Owen, Owen-Stoltenberg, Washington Agreement, Contact Group Plan, and the Dayton Agreement) initially called for dividing Bosnia-Herzegovina into Croatian and Serbian regions, and were based on the idealistic notion killing would end by Serbian admission.

The small UN force in Bosnia, UNPROFOR, suffered the same fate as UNAMIR did in Rwanda. Stopping the violence in Bosnia would have required a capable force, valid

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<sup>85</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 510.

<sup>86</sup> George H.W. Bush, Letter to Congressional Leaders, December 23, 1992. George H. W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum. Accessed April 10, 2014, [http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=5134&year=1992&month=all](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=5134&year=1992&month=all)

<sup>87</sup> George H.W. Bush, Letter to Congressional Leaders, December 23, 1992. George H. W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum. Accessed April 10, 2014, [http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=5134&year=1992&month=all](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=5134&year=1992&month=all)

<sup>88</sup> Rusmir Mahmutćehajić, *The Denial of Bosnia*, 38.

intelligence, and the ability to make quick decisions.<sup>89</sup> A significant reason why this was not the case was UNPROFOR was not authorized to make quick decisions, nor were its forces authorized in their rules of engagement to “defend” civilians.<sup>90</sup> The UN Charter for UNPROFOR stated the UNSC “authorizes UNPROFOR...in carrying out the mandate...acting in self-defense, to take necessary measures, including the use of force, in reply to bombardments against safe areas,” thus will protect civilians in the “safe areas.”<sup>91</sup> Yet the wording “in self defense” actually directed the forces to defend against Serbian aggression only when UNPROFOR members were at risk. This changed the UNPROFOR mission from one of *defense* of civilians into *deterrence* of Serb forces.<sup>92</sup> As the Serbian forces were not deterred, genocide continued.

As in the Rwandan case study, national leaders seemingly spent more time discussing why they should *not* intervene, rather than the conditions under which they should. The US experience in Vietnam and Somalia, and pressing domestic issues, meant the US was unlikely to respond to genocide in Bosnia despite a sizeable European lobby. As the Rwanda case study demonstrated, Africa conjures images of war, killing, and other humanitarian crises that can desensitize public citizens and foreign leaders to violence. Bosnia also demonstrated that prolonged violence could have the same effect. Both cases illustrated that genocide hides in the shadow of civil war. These factors conspired to deny the use of military intervention to stop genocide in Bosnia. The next case study of genocide, in Sudan in 2003, occurred after the Clinton Administration left office. Yet the response of the US to this genocide shared most, if not all of these factors.

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<sup>89</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, 242.

<sup>90</sup> Jay Willem Honing and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime*, 114.

<sup>91</sup> Jay Willem Honing and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime*, 114.

<sup>92</sup> Jay Willem Honing and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime*, 114.

## Chapter 5

### Sudan (2003-2006)



**Figure 3: Map of Sudan**

Source: United States Department of State, Diplomacy in Action Report.

<http://www.state.gov/t/pm/64740.htm>.

A 2003 internal conflict in Sudan spawned genocide in the frail and desolate nation when government-supported Arab “Janjaweed” militia began systemically killing and dislocating non-Arab Sudanese residents. This case study looks specifically at the genocide that occurred in the country from 2003 until May 2006 and the US response to it. Sudan serves an important case study for a number of reasons. First, the genocide was committed among the same religious group, but by different ethnic groups. Second, genocide in Sudan received little outside attention and no military intervention from Western governments, including the U.S, in spite of the richness of resources in the country, primarily oil. This case investigates the importance of strategic natural resources in decision making to intervene militarily to stop genocide.

As in the previous two cases, this chapter begins by addressing the background of the conflict and provides a timeline to include the speed in which atrocities were committed. Next, the chapter looks at the Sudan’s geopolitical location and importance, including its



strategic resources and assets. Then the chapter explores the ethnicity of the players involved. In addition, the chapter examines the political elements influencing the national security decision-making. Another crucial element in decision making to intervene is prior experience in the region, including domestic social attitudes during the period. Finally, the chapter assesses the US response, as well as the response of other international actors (UN, NATO, etc.) to the genocide in Sudan.

### **Background of Conflict**

Few places on earth have experienced widespread humanitarian challenges like Sudan. Images of Sudan, and many other Saharan African nations, often conjure images of famine, war, and desert wastelands strewn with malnourished children searching for something to eat or drink. While these images may be stereotypical, in the case of Sudan, many represent the reality there. More importantly, many are a product of the natural environment and some are products of the political environment that results in conflict and in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, genocide.

The Sudanese population is a conglomeration of Arab Sunni Muslims, native Africans of various tribes, many of whom are also Muslim, and a small minority of Christian Africans.<sup>1</sup> Sudan has often, though loosely, been ruled by Islamic, military regimes since its independence from the United Kingdom in 1956.<sup>2</sup> Since then, two long and brutal civil wars have battered the nation and further deepened major distrust between ethnic and religious groups. Both civil wars were characterized by the notion that northern Sudanese Muslim Arabs exploit and control southern Sudanese non-Muslims and/or non-Arab tribes.<sup>3</sup> This characterization remained evident during the 2003-2006 genocide.

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<sup>1</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Accessed March 12, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Accessed March 12, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, Accessed March 12, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>.

At the center of civil wars and genocide in Sudan is the western region of Darfur (Land of the Fur).<sup>4</sup> Although most of Darfur's residents are Muslims, ethnic lineage and cleavages between groups are a great source of friction and tension. These ethnic cleavages roughly conform to the three administrative states of Darfur: North, West, and South.<sup>5</sup> The Northern state is comprised primarily of non-Arab Zaghawa and a small minority of Meidab Arabs, the majority of who are nomadic camel herders. The Western state is made up of non-Arab farmers from the Fur, Massalit, Dajum, and Berti tribes. The Southern state is inhabited primarily by the Arab Baqqara. Although the latter speak Arabic and claim to be Arabs, they are descended from other ethnic groups from surrounding nations and experienced years of intra-ethnic relations.<sup>6</sup> The citizens of Darfur have lived in a constant state of insecurity and near-chaos since the 1984-85 Sahelian famine.<sup>7</sup> Since the famine, natural resources are valuable commodities. Such resources include grazing areas, water sources, and breeding grounds, the competition for which sows further distrust and animosity among the Arabs and non-Arabs of Darfur. It is significant to note that Darfur owes its economic underdevelopment to a lack of investment in the area, resulting in poor infrastructure and severely inadequate public services.<sup>8</sup> This lack of development dates back to colonial times when British officials invested heavily on urban centers such as the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, resulting in generations of further underdevelopment in Darfur.<sup>9</sup>

As with most conflicts, there is some debate on the origin of the current animosity between ethnic groups. Most scholars agree, however, that the conflict began centuries ago. Arabs arrived in Sudan between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup> Arab

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<sup>4</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities on the Sudan*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities on the Sudan*, 3.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities on the Sudan*, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Gérard Prunier, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*, vii.

<sup>8</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 19.

<sup>9</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Julie Flint & Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*, 9.

scholars and traders moved to Sudan at the same time as a group of nomadic Arab Juhayna Bedouins arrived in search of grass and water for their animals.<sup>11</sup> As the Bedouin tribes splintered, Bedouin culture remained intact and provides a source of underlying tension, as groups fought for access to scarce resources. The 2003 conflict was a testament to this, as many Arabs explained their stake in the conflict to be a “250-year-old search for land...but (always) denied to them.”<sup>12</sup> According to a study conducted by Osman Suliman, most people he surveyed argued that issues related to “land tenure” are the main reason for the tension and armed conflict in Darfur.<sup>13</sup>

Genocide began in 2003 between non-Arab rebel groups in Darfur and the forces of the Government of Sudan (GoS). A GoS proxy force of armed and funded Arab militias known as the “Janjaweed” carried out the atrocities.<sup>14</sup> Ethnicity is the primary divide, and the source for the genocide, between the largely Muslim population, as well as Arabs (GoS and Janjaweed militia forces) and non-Arabs.<sup>15</sup> The genocide began when two loosely aligned rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), began a spring offensive to attack government and military compounds in western Sudan (Darfur region). The rebel attacks were in response to their perceived ethnic political and economic marginalization by the ruling government. The attacks were also designed to protect the rebel communities that were continually under siege by the Janjaweed. It is critical for policy and decision makers to understand when a conflict moves from civil war to genocide. As the other case studies illustrated, genocide can be hidden in a cloud of civil war and “legitimate” state-

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<sup>11</sup> Julie Flint & Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*, 9.

<sup>12</sup> Julie Flint & Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Osman Suliman, *The Darfur Conflict: Geography or Institutions?*, 4.

<sup>14</sup> The “Janjaweed” was an Arab militia in Sudan utilized by the GoS as a killing force against non-Arabs in the Darfur region. The word “Janjaweed” is thought by many to have derived from the Arabic words *jinnī* (spirit) and *jawad* (horse). Others have argued the words for “gun, horse, and man” are intertwined, its origin not completely known. The Janjaweed have had long-term arguments over animal grazing rights with non-Arabs in Darfur and many violent conflicts between the Janjaweed and non-Arabs have occurred as a result. With civil war in the early 2000s, the GoS seized the opportunity to use the Janjaweed as a proxy force to kill and displace non-Arabs in Darfur.

<sup>15</sup> Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, One Hundred Eighth United States Congress, Second Session, September 9, 2004. “The Current Situation in the Sudan and the Prospects for Peace,” 14.

sanctioned violence. When the violence moves into the illegal realm of genocide, it is key that the outside international communities have accurate sources and reports to differentiate the violence in an effort to access whether to intervene.

The Janjaweed militias began their own counteroffensive in July 2003 and continued throughout the rest of the year.<sup>16</sup> In January 2004, the Janjaweed began a major government-sponsored offensive to kill non-Arabs in Darfur and end the rebellion in Darfur.<sup>17</sup> Throughout 2003-2004, the Janjaweed militias received significant government support to clear civilians considered disloyal or perceived as to the government.<sup>18</sup> In March 2004, the first UN official to speak on human atrocities, Mukesh Kapila, stated “Janjaweed Arabs” were conducting “systematic killings of African villagers” in Darfur constituting the “world’s worst humanitarian crisis.”<sup>19</sup> This “clearing” resulted in human atrocities committed against non-Arab villagers in the Western Darfur region totaling an estimated 300,000 deaths with another 3 million people displaced from February 2003 until May 2006.<sup>20</sup> The Janjaweed methodically annihilated their non-Arab Sudanese victims (primarily in Darfur region) by burning villages, looting economic resources, poisoning water sources, and murdering, raping, and torturing civilians.<sup>21</sup> On September 9, 2004, the US declared the deaths as genocide when US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, stated to US Senate’s Committee on Foreign Relations:

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<sup>16</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 114.

<sup>17</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 114.

<sup>18</sup> International Crisis Group, “Darfur Rising: Sudan’s New Crisis,” Executive Summary, March 25, 2004. Accessed May 4, 2014, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/sudan/Darfur%20Rising%20Sudans%20New%20Crisis.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 114.

<sup>20</sup> “United to End Genocide” website. Accessed March 14, 2014, <http://endgenocide.org/conflict-areas/sudan/sudan-backgrounder/>. Use of “May 2006” is merely to separate early genocide with the ongoing atrocities that occur in Sudan for purposes of this paper. On May 6, 2006, parties signed the Darfur Peace Agreement resulting in a brief period of peace.

<sup>21</sup> World Without Genocide Organization. Accessed March 15, 2014, <http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/darfur-genocide>.

The evidence leads us to the conclusion, the United States to the conclusion that genocide has occurred and may still be occurring in Darfur. We believe the evidence corroborates the specific intent of the perpetrators to destroy a group in whole or in part, the words of the Convention. This intent may be inferred from their deliberate conduct. We believe other elements of the Convention have been met as well.<sup>22</sup>

To complicate outside understanding of the situation in Darfur, the GoS claimed virtually no responsibility for the Janjaweed attacks. In addition, senior GoS leaders claimed rebel SLA/SLM and JEM forces were to blame for the violence.<sup>23</sup> Senior GoS officials expressed to the a US Congressional Delegation in June 2004 that there was “no connection between the GoS and Janjaweed.”<sup>24</sup> The US delegates nevertheless observed numerous cases of Janjaweed and GoS forces operating together in attacks on civilian non-Arab villages in combined aerial bombardment and ground force operations. In fact, the US delegation noted the “impunity under which the Janjaweed operated,” to include the Janjaweed encamping with GoS Army forces at various strategic checkpoints.<sup>25</sup> The evidence was overwhelming that the GoS forces and officials were not only ignoring the atrocities, but in many cases assisted the Janjaweed in the genocide.

### **Timeline and Speed of Atrocities**

The timeline of the Sudanese genocide is much different than that of Rwanda. Whereas the genocide in Rwanda was conducted rapidly in a few months, the Sudanese

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<sup>22</sup> Colin Powell, US Secretary of State, briefing to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 180<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session. September 9, 2004. Printed testimony of hearing, 9.

<sup>23</sup> US Congressional Delegation Trip Report, Senator Sam Brownback and Congressman Frank Wolf. Darfur, Western Sudan, June 27-29, 2004. Accessed March 16, 2014, <http://wolf.house.gov/sites/wolf.house.gov/files/documents/Sudan%20Trip%20Report%202004.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> US Congressional Delegation Trip Report, Senator Sam Brownback and Congressman Frank Wolf. Darfur, Western Sudan, June 27-29, 2004. Accessed March 16, 2014, <http://wolf.house.gov/sites/wolf.house.gov/files/documents/Sudan%20Trip%20Report%202004.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> US Congressional Delegation Trip Report, Senator Sam Brownback and Congressman Frank Wolf. Darfur, Western Sudan, June 27-29, 2004. Accessed March 16, 2014, <http://wolf.house.gov/sites/wolf.house.gov/files/documents/Sudan%20Trip%20Report%202004.pdf>.

genocide occurred through the repeated killing and ousting of non-Arab Sudanese for years. The timeline appears to have been lengthened due to a lack of GoS control over the Janjaweed militias. Ironically, many Darfurians were in the service of GoS armed forces, yet they were unable to stop the genocide.<sup>26</sup> Prior to the 2003 genocide, Darfurians found refuge in the Sudanese Army as a way out of the desolation of Darfur. As the GoS became more reliant on the Darfurians to make up the Army, its ability to monitor and control Darfur became problematic once the rebels of Darfur became a formidable force. The GoS had to rely on a third-party proxy—the Janjaweed—to serve as its fighting force in Darfur. As the Janjaweed began to impose “security” in Darfur, it became virtually impossible to reign back their violence.<sup>27</sup>

Once the rebel attacks on government infrastructure took place in February 2003, the Janjaweed began their own reprisal attacks near simultaneously. In mid-2003 there were no international or UN staff members in Sudan, so reporting on the conflict was inconsistent. In September 2003, media reports mentioned “burning villages and refugees pouring over the border” into nearby Chad.<sup>28</sup>

With a lack of “official” reporting by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), reporting was inconsistent and could appear exaggerated. By the end of 2003 and into 2004, a massive displacement had already taken place – many refugees still seeking shelter in nearby Chad.<sup>29</sup> Janjaweed attacks continued with the initial outsider reports coming from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working within Darfur.<sup>30</sup> Many NGOs continued to report the spreading campaign of murder, rape, and displacement into early spring 2004, as well as aerial bombardment of villages. With the incorporation of attack aircraft and gunship helicopters, it was evident the GoS had not only condoned the killing of non-Arab civilians, but had become an active participant.

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<sup>26</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan*, 31.

<sup>27</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan*, 31-32.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Cockett, *Sudan: Darfur and the Failure of an African State*, 169.

<sup>29</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan*, 33.

<sup>30</sup> Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan*, 33.



As news sources, NGOs, and governments around the world became better informed of the atrocities occurring in Sudan, pressure to halt the killings began to pick up, while political pressure mounted. Yet, there was little discussion publically about US military intervention options to halt the genocide. As with Rwanda and Bosnia, there were a number of elements and international relations considerations that shaped the US decision not to intervene militarily to stop the genocide.

### **Geopolitics – Resources, Assets, and Geography**

Resources such as oil, fresh water, and animal grazing rights have shaped the geopolitical landscape of Sudan. According to Richard Cockett, Sudan is a country where all “the major forces that shape the contemporary world” collide: “religious fundamentalism, high finance, terrorism, ethnic hatred, oil, nationalism, and the rise of Asia.”<sup>31</sup> This crossroads of elements has had catastrophic effects for Sudan and its people. The religious commonality has had little bonding effect as the Arab and non-Arab divide harbored animosity that caused further conflict over natural resources in Sudan.

Sudan is interesting given its wealth of specific natural resources. The country had relatively large oil reserves, yet world leaders were seemingly uninterested in intervening to stop the genocide. Whereas pundits commenting on the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 cited oil as *the reason* for the invasion, neither the US nor the Western European countries seemed willing to intervene in Sudan. One potential explanation is the US had not invested in Sudanese oil. In other words, the US did not have a stake in Sudanese oil, and therefore intervention to secure the resource was outside its realm of consideration. In addition, countries willing and able to intervene, namely the US and other Western powers, also had little economic interest Sudan’s “strategic natural resources” due to sanctions imposed by the US in previous years. The GoS had harbored Osama bin Laden and therefore was associated with his terrorist network. In response for failing to hand bin Laden over for previous acts of terrorism, President Bill Clinton placed economic sanctions on Sudan, including its oil industry. On November 3, 1997, Clinton issued

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<sup>31</sup> Richard Cockett, *Sudan: Darfur and the Failure of an African State*, 2.



Executive Order (E.O.) 13067. This E.O. imposed “a trade embargo against the entire territory of Sudan and a comprehensive blocking of the GoS.”<sup>32</sup> The sanctions continued under President George W. Bush and were eventually extended, as a result of continued humanitarian concerns with the GoS.<sup>33</sup>

Most of Sudan's oil reserves are located in the Muglad and Melut basins, located in the southern portion of Sudan.<sup>34</sup> International oil companies from Asia—The China National Petroleum Corporation, India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, and Malaysia's Petronas—were the dominant investors in and users of Sudanese oil.<sup>35</sup> While oil rich, Sudan did not have leverage of its oil reserves with Western nations likely to intervene, the countries benefitting from them—China, India, and other Asian nations—were less likely to intervene militarily in Sudan. This lack of US political motivation to intervene on behalf of economic interests may have also been exasperated by a lack of connection with the Sudanese either by ethnicity or through a public lobby during the crisis.

### **Ethnicity and lobby**

Sudan had minimal political lobby in the US during the early 2000s. In fact, most of the lobbying done regarding Sudan was *against* GoS. A significant force behind US public policy on Sudan was an influential bloc of US conservative Christian groups.<sup>36</sup> The lobby of US policy makers alleged that fellow Christians in Sudan were being persecuted. Their allegations also included “the issues of slavery and the forcible

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<sup>32</sup> United States Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), “Sudan Sanctions Program.” Updated November 5, 2013. Accessed March 17, 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/sudan.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> United States Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), “Sudan Sanctions Program.” Updated November 5, 2013. Accessed March 17, 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/sudan.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> Today the basins are located in the newly formed nation of South Sudan, which became an independent nation in 2011.

<sup>35</sup> United States Energy Information Administration. Accessed March 15, 2014, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=SU&trk=m>.

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Blunt, Africa Specialist, BBC News, “What Drives US Policy in Sudan?” June 30, 2004.

imposition of Sharia law.”<sup>37</sup> The conservative lobby convinced President George W. Bush to impose even tougher economic sanctions on GoS but convinced him it was not in the best interest of the US to intervene militarily in Sudan.

The fact that Sudanese Darfurians did not have a strong political voice inside the US lobby should not be surprising as they made up only a fraction of a percentage of immigrants. According to the US Census Bureau, African-born US residents made up between 0.4 percent to 1.8 percent of total foreign-born residents from 1960 to 1990, respectively.<sup>38</sup> Of African immigrants, Sudanese-born ones made up 2.4 percent of the African immigrant population, barely making the top 10 African nations emigrating to the US. Even Africans saw Sudan as more of an “Arab” nation and less of a traditional African state. This can also be explained by Sudanese membership in the Arab League.

**Table 1: African-born US Residents Against Total Foreign-born.**

Year	Total foreign born	Number	African born Share of total foreign born
1960	9,738,091	35,355	0.40%
1970	9,619,302	80,143	0.80%
1980	14,079,906	199,723	1.40%
1990	19,797,316	363,819	1.80%
2000	31,107,889	881,300	2.80%

Source: United States Census Bureau data. Migration Policy Institute. Kristen McCabe “African Immigrants in the United States,” July 21, 2011.  
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/african-immigrants-united-states>

The first Sudanese president after independence from the United Kingdom succumbed to Egyptian pressure to remain closely aligned with Egypt, as opposed to joining the British Commonwealth. This allowed Sudan to join the Arab League in 1958, which was a crucial demarcation for the Sudanese, as it formally made the country a part of the Arab World. This greatly alienated Africans and shaped the political future for

<sup>37</sup> Elizabeth Blunt, Africa Specialist, BBC News, “What Drives US Policy in Sudan?” June 30, 2004.

<sup>38</sup> United States Census Bureau data. Migration Policy Institute. Kristen McCabe “African Immigrants in the United States,” July 21, 2011. Accessed March 18, 2014, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/african-immigrants-united-states>.

Sudan, despite the country's simultaneous membership in the Organization for African Unity (OAU).

With such a small Sudanese population living in the US, there were few constituents engaging US political leaders or raising public awareness about the crisis evolving in Sudan. Even the US media was slow to respond to the crisis with little discussion of genocide in the early years of hostilities against Sudanese civilians.

Television coverage of the crisis in Darfur mentioned the term “genocide” in much fewer than half of the television stories US-wide.<sup>39</sup> The language the media utilizes to frame a story can generate tremendous amounts of support for or against a particular issue or cause. In fact, Piers Robinson termed the phrase “empathy framing” as a way to explain how the media frames stories that “lead to sympathy for crisis victims and to consequent (public) pressure...for Western governments to intervene.”<sup>40</sup> In 2004, the term “ethnic cleansing” was used only 45 percent of the time in broadcasts, while “genocide” was used even less – 37 percent of the time.

Of course, a lack of infrastructure and security in the Darfur area, coupled with a lack of GoS cooperation, led to inaccuracies and inadequate media reporting in the region during the early day and months of the conflict. By 2005, however, the term “genocide” was used in over 90 percent of the stories demonstrating the atrocities were being reported, but still not acted upon by Western leaders.<sup>41</sup> Even when network television broadcasts were discussing genocide or human atrocities, there was not a single story debating the possibility of a US military intervention in 2003-2004.<sup>42</sup> It wasn't until 2006 that the major networks, along with political leaders worldwide, began to debate the possibilities of military intervention to stop genocide in Sudan.

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<sup>39</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 61.

<sup>40</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 61.

<sup>41</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 62.

<sup>42</sup> All “stories” running at least one minute in length on US network television. Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 63.

Just as Kenneth Waltz stated, and Chapter Two highlighted, nations act in self-interest for their own security. Senior US leaders in the Bush Administration did not view Sudan as sufficiently relevant to US self-interest to justify military intervention. Perhaps a large part of the perceived ambivalence of the US was the experience of the US, and its closest allies, in Africa during recent years. This may help explain the US lack of drive for military intervention.

### **US experience and international actors**

The US experience with Sudan, much like Rwanda and Bosnia, was shaped by the US experience in Somalia in 1993. As preceding case study chapters have suggested, successive Presidents were haunted by the specter of American soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. This single event shaped US foreign policy engagement in Africa dramatically. In light of the failure of Somalia, the Clinton Administration began to withdraw from humanitarian relief operations in Africa.<sup>43</sup> This process continued under President George W. Bush. Although Sudan and Somalia are independent nations, each with its own issues and concerns, the average US policy maker reasoned by analogy that Sudan would be no different than Somalia or even Vietnam—a potential strategic quagmire for US military intervention.<sup>44</sup> This faulty reasoning, paired with Sudan's state sponsorship of terrorist groups, shaped the US view of Sudan and may have contributed to the US decision to not intervene.

The Janjaweed (and alleged GoS regular Army) attacks on the SLM/SLA and JEM rebels, and the resulting genocide that took place from 2003-2004, coincided with a tumultuous period in US politics. US military operations were ongoing in Afghanistan and stability and counterinsurgency operations just beginning in the wake of the invasion of Iraq in early 2003, the Bush Administration was preoccupied with everything but Sudan. The US lost significant international political influence and goodwill as a result of the Iraq invasion, leaving it with little international leverage on Sudan. According to Gallup Historical Trend Polls, President Bush's approval rating in September 2001 was

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<sup>43</sup> Rod Thornton, *Asymmetric Warfare*, 10.

<sup>44</sup> Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War*, 258-262.

the highest of his presidency at 90 percent approval.<sup>45</sup> By the time an initial US Congressional Delegation visited Sudan in June 2004, President Bush's approval rating had plummeted to 48 percent and would never gain the political influence of his first term.<sup>46</sup> This lack of international political capital, in contrast to President Clinton's limited domestic political capital, ensured the Bush Administration was unable to convince Western allies or even the US Congress to use military force to stop the Sudanese genocide. Political influence may have been one hurdle, while the strained relations between the US and Sudanese governments may have also contributed to a lack of interest in stopping the genocide.

In 1998, the US military struck a Sudanese chemical plant with cruise missiles in an effort to kill suspected terrorists.<sup>47</sup> The Khartoum strike, ordered by President Clinton, was in retribution for an al-Qaida attack on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Sudan provided al-Qaida (AQ) leader, Usama bin Laden (UBL), a base of operation from 1991 until 1996 when he moved to Afghanistan.<sup>48</sup> The strike was not successful and highly embarrassing to the US intelligence community and the Clinton Administration. The labeling of Sudan as a terrorist state continued throughout the remainder of the Clinton Administration into President George W. Bush's term beginning in 2001.

As late as 2002, the Bush Administration was still labeling Sudan as a "terrorist state." National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, along with other principles on Bush's National Security Council (NSC), lumped Sudan in with Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria as states sponsoring terrorism.<sup>49</sup> The terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington DC on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 shifted the US policy focus internationally to a "Global War

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<sup>45</sup> Gallup Historical Trend poll, "Presidential Approval Ratings – George W. Bush," Accessed March 17, 2014, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-ratings-george-bush.aspx>.

<sup>46</sup> Gallup Historical Trend poll, "Presidential Approval Ratings – George W. Bush," Accessed March 17, 2014, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-ratings-george-bush.aspx>.

<sup>47</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, 63.

<sup>48</sup> Simon Tisdall, "Sudan fears US military intervention over Darfur," *The Guardian*. January 15, 2009. Accessed March 16, 2014.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jan/15/sudan-unamid-obama>

<sup>49</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, 131.

on Terror.” But despite the world-wide view of the struggle, the majority of resources and attention on Afghanistan and Iraq meant there was precious little left to stop the ongoing genocide in Sudan.

## Response

With negative preconceptions of military intervention in Africa as a result of Somalia, along with recent allegations of Sudanese support of terrorism and the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US response to genocide in Sudan was feeble at best. By mid-2004, US leaders took increasing notice of the atrocities in Sudan, particularly in the Darfur region, thanks to increasing media reports and political lobbying discussed above. In July 2004, the UN Security Council (UNSC) demanded the Sudanese government disarm the Janjaweed within 30 day.<sup>50</sup> By September 2004, the UNSC established an Independent Commission into Darfur (ICID) and stated Sudan had not met the UN criteria to disarm the Janjaweed. That same month the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, described the Darfur killings as “genocide.”<sup>51</sup> Powell also engaged with Sudanese Foreign Minister Osman Ismail to discuss US concerns and requests. Powell proposed to the Sudanese Foreign Minister, “We (US) want the Government of Sudan (GOS) to: (1) stop Janjaweed violence by employing military force if necessary; (ii) remove all obstacles to humanitarian access; (iii) cooperate fully with international monitoring, and; (iv) agree to engage in political talks with the Darfur armed opposition.”<sup>52</sup> Powell and others in the Bush Administration believed the “crisis in Darfur threatens the implementation of a north-south peace agreement.”<sup>53</sup> From this point, the US response continued to be mere rhetoric consisting of “demands” for GoS intervention to stop violence. The US did provide humanitarian relief and economic assistance, but never seriously considered military intervention to stop the genocide.

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<sup>50</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 114.

<sup>51</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, Walter C. Soderlund, and E. Donald Briggs, *The Responsibility to Protect in Darfur: The Role of Mass Media*, 114.

<sup>52</sup> National Security Archive. US Department of State document, “*The Secretary’s Meeting with Sudanese Foreign Minister Osman Ismail.*” June 29, 2004.

<sup>53</sup> National Security Archive. US Department of State document, “*The Secretary’s Meeting with Sudanese Foreign Minister Osman Ismail.*” June 29, 2004.



The international response to genocide occurred “too little, too late,” both in terms of stopping the genocide and holding those guilty for it accountable.<sup>54</sup> While military intervention sanctioned by states would have been required to stop the genocide, even NGOs had difficulty getting basic humanitarian goods to the people of Darfur. This was a result of NGOs being under funded, the danger a marauding militia posed, and a lack of infrastructure in the area.

A US Department of State After Action Report for June 2004 indicated, “Appeals from the UN, Red Cross, and NGOs are under funded resulting in major gaps in assistance.”<sup>55</sup> Although by mid-2004 the US had committed over \$188 million in funding through 2005, the same Report noted additional funding was needed from the European Union (EU), and most importantly, from the rest of the world via a UN Security Council resolution.<sup>56</sup> In addition to much-needed funding, the poor roads and daunting terrain, coupled with insufficient support from the GoS, further hindered relief efforts. Poor transportation infrastructure and a lack of legitimate government support also chronically obstructed the provision of humanitarian assistance to the affected Darfur population.<sup>57</sup> While appeals for additional assistance were continually made, they were only as good as the ability to get much needed supplies to people who needed them and provide security so supplies would not be looted or stolen. Without security in the form of disarming the Janjaweed, many humanitarian workers were unable to provide aid in Sudan. The genocide was compounded by near-catastrophic human suffering for Darfurians, many of whom lacked food and water, and this led to further escalation of violence. The various tribes, both Arab and non-Arab, continued to battle one another for “resources, water, pasturage, cattle, and people.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Julie Flint & Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*, xiv.

<sup>55</sup> National Security Archive. US Department of State document, “*Sudan Demarche: Crisis in Darfur Requires EU Pressure and Resources.*” July 1, 2004.

<sup>56</sup> National Security Archive. US Department of State document, “*Sudan Demarche: Crisis in Darfur Requires EU Pressure and Resources.*” July 1, 2004.

<sup>57</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, Accessed on March 12, 2014. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Ruth Iyob and Gilbert Khadiagala, *Sudan: The Elusive Quest for Peace*, 50.



A critical element to actually stop genocide, separate from the *desire* to stop genocide, is a nation-state's *ability* to protect power rapidly and in mass. The *ability* to stop genocide is more important than simply the *desire* to do so. A nation must be militarily sufficient enough to stop genocide while it is occurring.

While many nations, groups, and individuals clamor to “do something” in response to genocide or humanitarian crises, few nations have the capability to transport and supply a force able to conduct peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Most US military forces were preoccupied with Iraq and Afghanistan during this period of time. Without the US military acting as the leading force, the lack of political support for military intervention was compounded by insufficient Western forces capable of disarming or deterring Janjaweed or GoS forces. The US did not completely neglect Darfur as its forces transported significant amounts of material goods to aid the humanitarian crisis. For example, during various operations in Africa the US has used its force to transport foreign troops and reinforce UN and host-nation peacekeepers. With the requirement for food, water, medical supplies, as well as significant numbers of ground forces, few nations other than the US were capable of airlifting such tonnage rapidly enough to have an effect.<sup>59</sup>

When one thinks of Sudan, the images of famine stricken people are prevalent. Additionally, Sudan, and more specifically Darfur, still conjures images of genocide that went unchecked. Rwanda, Bosnia, and Sudan are three case studies where military intervention was not utilized to stop genocide. There are common links between the three cases that will help illustrate why nations do not intervene to stop genocide and what characteristics nations must consider when debating a military intervention to stop genocide.

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<sup>59</sup> Paul F. Spaven. “A US Air Force Strategy for Africa,” Drew Paper Number 7, 28.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

The US National Security Strategy promotes the idea that the US will defend universal human rights, while the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide creates the international framework legitimizing and directing nations of the world to intervene militarily to protect human rights and end or prevent genocide. Yet continually the US and its allies fail to use military intervention to stop genocide. Since WWII and the signing of the 1948 Convention, this ideal has been challenged by the pragmatic considerations of policy. By understanding the historical characteristics of limitations in utilizing military intervention, this study will actually serve to help identify future challenges and better prepare the US to intervene when appropriate.

While most Americans would agree that helping those in need is a noble thing, the decision-making rationale at the highest levels of policy in the US is much more complicated when considering the rewards of action against the risks involved. This study highlighted the dilemma associated with choosing to place US military members in dangerous situations to stop genocide or to ignore the perceived moral obligation and US interest in doing so. The debate grows in intensity when the operation is perceived as not having strategic importance to the US, but consists instead of humanitarian operations based solely on moral grounds. After the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu, in which members of US special operations forces were engaged in battle and during which 19 Americans lost their lives, the US political landscape shifted further away from potentially risky humanitarian operations. As Samuel Huntington argued, it was, “morally and politically indefensible that members of the armed forces should be killed to prevent Somalis from killing each other.”<sup>1</sup> Yet this analogy has also darkened US resolve in combating genocide. The use of the Somalia analogy has been the rallying cry of Realist opponents to intervention to stop genocide. Just as Huntington highlighted a tension inherent in

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Smith, “Humanitarian Intervention: An Overview of Ethical Issues,” *Ethics and International Affairs* Vol 12,” 63.

humanitarian operations, this study identified additional characteristics that may further frame the problem.

The Rwandan case demonstrated that the speed of atrocities might require a rapid response, not simply as a rapid-reaction *force*, but in the *authorities* or responsibilities of IGOs assigned to the conflict. Rwanda also demonstrated that previous experience shapes the political pressure to respond or not by reasoning through analogy. These considerations, coupled with the prevailing policy trends reflected in the various International Relations theories, may determine whether or not a leader sees greater value in acting unilaterally or through international cooperation. In the case of Rwanda, President Clinton's emphasis of validating the UN led to bureaucratic debate and delayed responses precisely at the moment when speed of response was critical to saving lives. Rwanda also illustrated the requirement for reliable information, as well as the ability to act based on that information. General Dallaire had access to reliable information, but was not authorized to act upon it. The lack of capable forces, along with a lack of authority to respond to stop the genocide but only to monitor, created a situation that may actually have encouraged violence in Rwanda. Interahamwe leaders saw UN forces as impartial observers who would merely stand by and report their actions, not stop them. This point is critical. If a nation is willing to commit forces, those forces must be fully authorized stop genocide, as well as IGOs taking a side in the conflict.

The Bosnian case has many similar characteristics when compared to Rwanda, namely in the difficulty of gathering reliable data and the authorities and responsibilities of IGOs. Additionally, the critical nature of domestic politics, as well as the Constructionist view of the UN's value in the eyes of the US President, combined to limit the US's response. The situation in Bosnia differed in the timeline of the atrocities. Whereas Rwanda occurred in days, Bosnia took months and years. This further strengthens the notion that the UN may be incapable of stopping genocide, as it is nearly impossible to gather the necessary political consensus among almost 200 member states and UN Security Council members with competing interests and veto power. As each nation has its own self-interests at stake, greater consideration must be given to unilateral action to stop genocide, or action by smaller coalitions of like-minded nations. This does not relieve

the UN of responsibility or obligation, but may simply reframe and redefine the purpose the UN best serves in the abolition of genocide. Srebrenica offers the best example that the capability and willingness make and keep declared “safe zones” safe is required, not simply the ability to staff and monitor them.

The Sudanese case suggests the notion is false that states will intervene in areas only when strategic resources, such as oil, are at stake. Sudan, with its rich oil reserves, did not generate much public outcry for intervention. Part of the problem was a lack of African political influence within Western democracies, especially the US, while another was a lack of reliable information in such a remote area. This problem was made worse by the fact that US experience in Africa continued to be shaped by an analogy of Somalia a decade after the event. Senior US policy makers were otherwise focused during the time of the Sudan genocide on pressing domestic issues and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Similar to Rwanda and Bosnia, Sudan suffered from a lack of US political energy or resolve, despite its resources and location, to intervene due to Realist considerations that there were more important domestic political issues. With limited political capital to spend on domestic or international issues, politicians are unlikely to spend resources on places like Sudan, when faced with controversy at home or abroad.

Although each case was unique, there are common characteristics visible in all three cases. This study has identified three primary characteristics that may explain why the US does not utilize military intervention to stop genocide. While this list is not inclusive, it may offer a glimpse into challenges to utilizing military intervention and also might help streamline future intervention operations.

The first characteristic preventing the US from utilizing military intervention to stop genocide is the nature of international relations. More specifically, the prevailing school of international relations theory through which a nation and its political leaders view the world and acts is key to understanding its priorities and likely courses of action. Whether a nation makes decisions based primarily on its self-interest and security (Realist); on the value of the individual or human rights (Liberalist); or on the importance of international institutions and ideas (Constructivist), can help explain why political leaders make the decisions they do. How a nation views the world, and more specifically through which

IR lens it does the viewing, is critical to understanding and possibly predicting a nation's response to genocide.

Many US presidents are not willing to burn political capital on humanitarian efforts unless the operation affects US security, prosperity, or a vital US interest. Matthew Baum noted, "Presidents are concerned less with what the public thinks about a policy today than with what it is likely to think over the long run, especially at the time of the next election."<sup>2</sup> This study illustrated that in both Rwanda and Bosnia, President Clinton was under pressure from his political party to advance an ambitious domestic agenda on which he had limited political capital to spend. As a result, he was not willing to spend political capital on a foreign policy initiative resending military forces for African operations. This Realist view of African operations was exemplified with the US still reeling from the images of US service members being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. Despite the fact that genocide was occurring, the President did not task the US military with stopping the violence.<sup>3</sup> Instead, the US Congress forbade any US funding of peacekeeping in Rwanda after October 7, 1994 except "for any action necessary to protect US citizens."<sup>4</sup> This policy demonstrates that competing national interests have an effect on a nation's desire and ability to intervene. It also shows the limited nature of the Executive Branch. A President has limited influence on policy due to the Legislative Branch's power. In the case of Rwanda, it appears the Republican controlled House of Representatives sought to thwart the Democratic President's expansion of US commitments to the UN.

Secondly, the importance of relevant, accurate, and timely information is key, and its lack may prevent the US from utilizing military intervention. In all three cases, the pace of atrocities, the intensity of the violence, and the understanding of the nature of violence (genocide or unfortunate casualties of civil war) was complicated and difficult to

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew Baum. "Going Private: Public, Opinion, Presidential Rhetoric, and the Domestic Politics of Audience Costs in US Foreign Policy Crises." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, October 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Watch. [http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/Geno1-3-04.htm#P95\\_39230](http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/Geno1-3-04.htm#P95_39230). Retrieved December 22, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Lauren Ploch, "Africa Command: US Strategic Interests and the Role of the US Military in Africa," July 22, 2011, Congressional Research Service, 27.

articulate, much less debate, due to a lack of reliable information. When national leaders and policy makers are considering military intervention, the sources providing “ground truth” and the legitimacy of the sources may help or hinder the cause for intervention.

In all three cases the ability to rely on sound information sources proved to be problematic. Stathis Kalyvas noted, “Civil War often transforms local and personal grievances into lethal violence.”<sup>5</sup> With increased violence, an increase of uncertainty is reasonable to assume. Therefore dependable intelligence is critical.

Although NGOs may have representatives on the ground where genocide is occurring, such organizations have their own “self-interest” and agenda. Perhaps the term “genocide” is spring-loaded and inaccurately used by various groups (NGOs, among others) to provoke action. Conversely, the NGOs might very well have the best information available. This is part of the uncertainty that must be weighed in managing the information.

The speed and scale of atrocities, as well as the accuracy of reporting, complicates the ability to make effective national security decisions out of a sense of moral obligation and necessity. In the case of Rwanda, there was very little time for extended deliberation about whether or not genocide should be stopped. The incredible pace of the killing failed to alarm international actions. In Bosnia and Rwanda, the presence of UN forces monitoring the situation provided timely, accurate, and credible information. As those chapters demonstrated, however, such information was either disbelieved or not acted upon for a variety of reasons.

Third, international governmental organizations (UN, NATO, etc.) have utility, but also limitations in stopping genocide. The UN, in particular, has the ability to authorize a legitimate intervention into a state. Such authorization can take considerable time and may not occur at all, given the number of member states and their competing views and interests. In addition, the member states of the UN Security Council have veto power on most decisions and more often than not, a veto is exercised out of state self-interest rather than the collective good. For a number of political reasons, US leaders may be unwilling

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<sup>5</sup> Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 389.

to cede command authority of US forces to UN or other IGO commanders. Given that the UN has no standing military response forces of its own, the organization may be best suited to discuss the need for action to prevent genocide and authorize others to act on its behalf. As the world's sole superpower, the US stands as one of the only nations capable of leading operations anywhere on the globe to stop genocide. The real question for future Presidents is whether the US will accept the great responsibility that comes with great power.

For the UN to take a more active role in stopping genocide, one important norm needs to change regarding the use of military forces. United Nations peacekeepers are universally respected for their impartiality; this is the reason why nation states trust UN forces to monitor peace agreements. The peacekeeping paradigm simply cannot apply in circumstances of intrastate war, and in particular, civil wars. The simple act of deploying into a civil war and providing aid to civilians will be interpreted as taking sides by one or more of the combatants. The UN forces can and should be authorized to use proportionate force in response to attacks and preventative force when genocide is occurring.

The US should also drop any pretensions of impartiality in regard to stopping genocide. The US has a tremendous amount of influence over the UN and other members of the Security Council and must consider serving as the lead nation in stopping genocide given its capabilities and influence. Jonathan Stevenson argued that the US stalled the council on a "unanimously prointervention" vote of sending 5,500 troops to Rwanda "merely by voicing its reservations."<sup>6</sup> The ability to take a side is endemic in stopping genocide. Although it is difficult, the US must position itself not as a neutral actor or observer, but as the defender of human values and norms in a challenging political environment.

It is important to note that the three characteristics are not mutually exclusive, but rather are linked together as a demonstration of the US' commitment and will to enforce the norms it espouses and has helped create. When individual nations are unable or unwilling to act to stop genocide, the UN must lead the effort. With a lack of reliable or

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<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Stevenson, *Losing Mogadishu: Testing US Policy in Somalia*, 136.



timely information, the UN could be challenged to convince most military-capable nations that it is in their collective best interest to intervene to stop genocide. Common values and human rights must be defended or else the very nations (US) or institutions (UN) that claim to uphold and represent them ultimately lose their credibility.

A critical element to stopping genocide, separate from the *desire* to stop genocide, is a nation-state's *ability* to protect power rapidly and in sufficient mass to make a difference. The ability is not simply measured in force, but in political willingness. This study highlighted the danger in utilizing a Liberalist or Constructivist approach in achieving Realist objectives. The same can be said for utilizing a Realist approach for Liberalist or Constructivist goals.

A main theme throughout this study is that of “uncertainty.” Uncertainty creates risk, and risk is politically threatening. All of them create the friction that might prevent a nation from utilizing military intervention to stop genocide. To minimize risk, a nation must minimize uncertainty. This study has also highlighted the fact that it is one thing to be a “Monday morning quarterback”—to question why the US did not intervene to stop genocide. It is another thing to be willing to risk one's own blood and treasure to stop genocide. Many nations, groups, and individuals clamor to “do something” to stop genocide, yet few have both will and the capability to do so. Few nations are willing to assume the risk of intervention, much less pay the costs of the doing so. Failing to intervene militarily to stop genocide will only serve in “killing them a second time” and further add to our moral guilt and shame.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Elie Wiesel, *Night*, xv.

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